



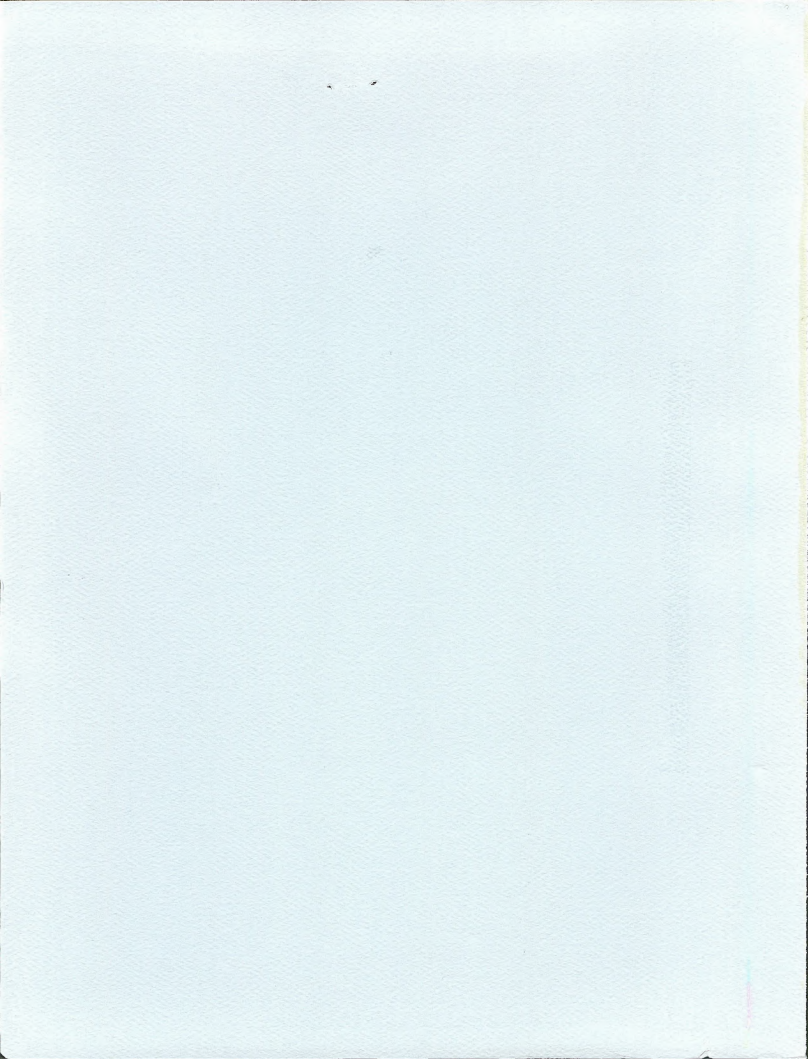
WILL WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

1987



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ELY DISTRICT OFFICE
ELY, NEVADA



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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

for the

SCHELL RESOURCE AREA

NEVADA

Prepared by

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

ELY DISTRICT



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The proposed land use plan amendment contains wilderness recommendations, subject to change during administrative review, on 425,023 acres of public land in White Pine, Nye, and Lincoln Counties, Nevada. The action responds to the mandate of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to review all public land roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands having wilderness characteristics; determine their suitability or unsuitability for wilderness designation; and report these suitability recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991.

For Further information contact: Mr. Gerald M. Smith, Schell Resource Area manager at Star Route 5, Box 1, Ely, Nevada 89301 or call (702) 289-4865.

Date final statement was made available to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Public:

1. The first part of the report is a general statement of the work done during the year.

2. The second part is a detailed account of the work done in each of the various departments.

3. The third part is a summary of the results of the work done during the year.

4. The fourth part is a statement of the financial position of the institution at the end of the year.

5. The fifth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

6. The sixth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

7. The seventh part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

8. The eighth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

9. The ninth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

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21. The fourteenth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

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23. The fifteenth part is a statement of the work done by the various departments during the year.

ABBREVIATIONS

AUM - Animal Unit Month

BLM - Bureau of Land Management

BM - Bureau of Mines

CFR - Code of Federal Regulations

EIS - Environmental Impact Statement

FLPMA - Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976

MFP - Management Framework Plan

NDOW - Nevada Department of Wildlife

ORV - Off-Road Vehicle

RA - Resource Area

RMP - Resource Management Plan

USGS - United States Geologic Survey

WSA - Wilderness Study Area



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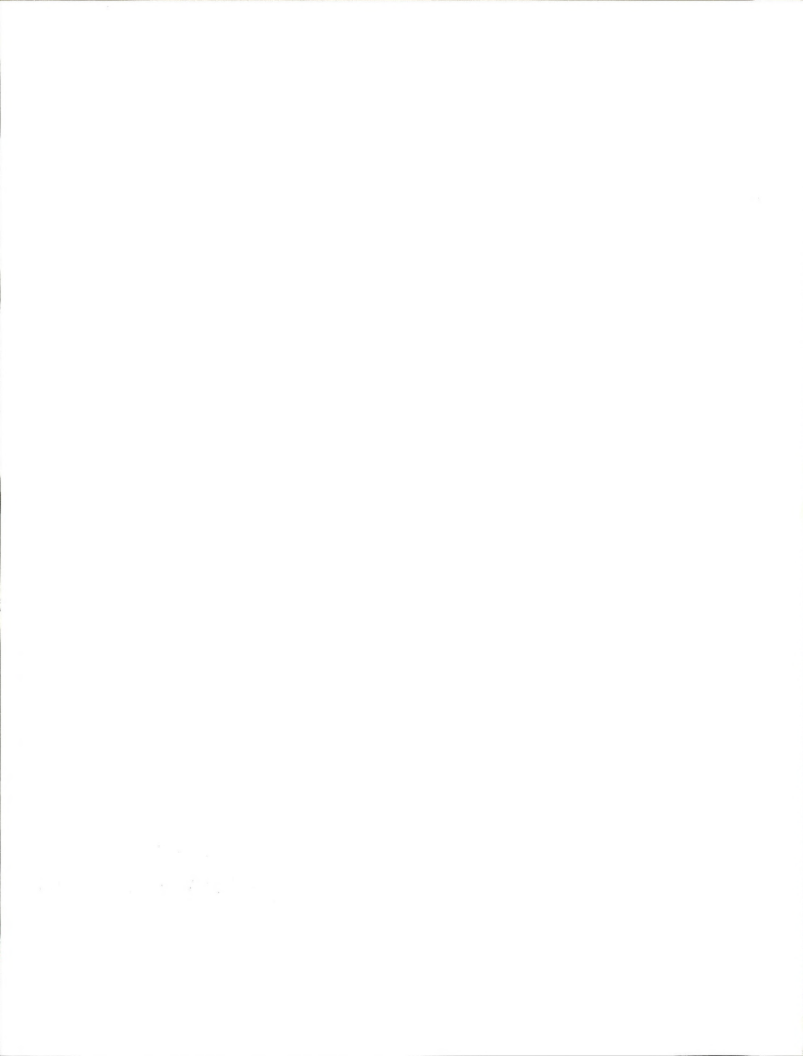
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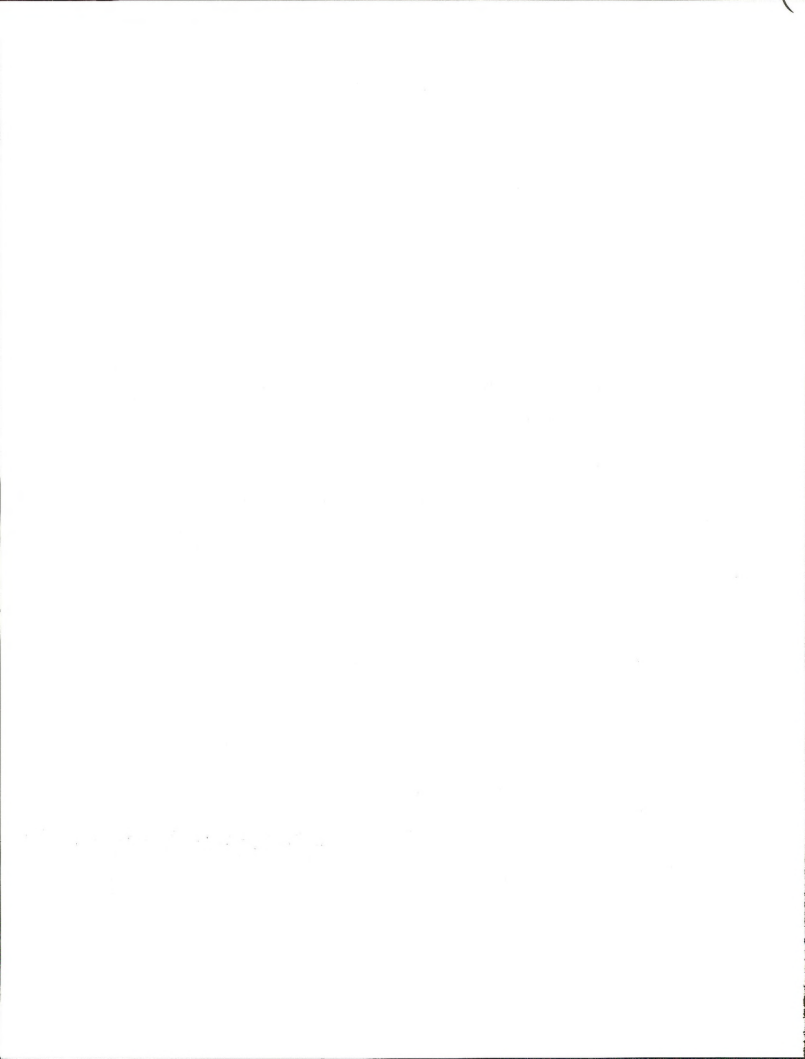
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SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of the proposed actions are to manage and preserve the wilderness characteristics on 227,232 acres within six wilderness study areas (WSA's) in the Schell Resource Area and to manage the remaining 197,791 acres within seven WSA's for purposes other than wilderness.

The eight WSA's being studied are covered by the Schell Management Framework Plan (MFP). These study areas are listed below:

WSA Name	WSA Number	Acreage	County
Mount Grafton	NV-040-169	73,215	White Pine/Lincoln
Far South Egans	NV-040-172	53,224	Lincoln/Nye
Fortification Range	NV-040-177	41,615	Lincoln
Table Mountain	NV-040-197	35,958	Lincoln
White Rock Range	NV-040-202	24,065	Lincoln/Beaver(UT)
Parnip Peak	NV-040-206	88,175	Lincoln
Worthington Mountains	NV-040-242	47,633	Lincoln
Weepah Spring	NV-040-246	61,137	Lincoln/Nye

ISSUES

The scoping process for the Schell Resource Area Wilderness EIS encompassed issues identified by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) staff; by the public during formal scoping meetings on issue identification in Ely, Reno, Pioche, and Baker; during a public scoping period held from July 23 to September 10, 1982; and from comments on the draft EIS by the public and by federal, state, and local agencies. The environmental issues identified for analysis in this EIS are listed below:

- Impacts on Wilderness Values
- Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources
- Impacts on Development of Energy Resources
- Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction
- Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest
- Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use
- Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

The following issues were identified during scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis in the EIS.

- Economic Impacts on Livestock Operations
- Impacts on Air Quality Classification
- Impacts on State and Private Inholdings
- Impacts on Wilderness Designation or Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep
- Impacts on Water Quality
- Impacts on Cultural Resources
- Impacts on Hunter and Trapper Access
- Impacts on Wildlife
- Impacts on Military Air Operations Over Wilderness Areas
- Impacts on Threatened or Endangered Species
- Impacts on Soil Erosion

ALTERNATIVES AND CONCLUSIONS

The alternatives assessed in this EIS include: a proposed action for each WSA; a no wilderness and an all wilderness alternative for each WSA; and partial wilderness alternatives for six of the WSA's.

MOUNT GRAFTON WSA

NV-040-169

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 30,115 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 43,101 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to wilderness qualities in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 41,900 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 20 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 7 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the unsuitable portion.

There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.

The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 73,216 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities, bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 58 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 20 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 2.5 miles of vibroseis line would be foregone due to tighter wilderness restrictions and absence of oil and gas leases. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and only minor impacts to new projects.

The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 1,800 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.

Recreational ORV use of 350 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 43,649 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 29,567 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 28,370 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 38 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 13 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the unsuitable portion.

There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.

The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of 100 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 73,216 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term negative impacts to the Mount Grafton WSA's wilderness qualities would occur on approximately 1,600 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and mining activity. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as naturalness would be diminished. The remaining 71,600 acres would retain their wilderness values.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

FAR SOUTH EGANS WSA

NV-040-172

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 42,316 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 10,908 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on 1,850 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,060 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources are low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

The harvest of 10,800 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 53,224 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to the lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One of the two exploratory oil wells in addition to 18 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

The harvest of 15,000 cords of fuelwood, 980 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 40,615 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 12,609 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 1,980 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and would result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 10,630 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if wilderness designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

The harvest of 9,960 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 53,224 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 3,900 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. In addition, historic values in Sawmill Canyon could be affected by commercial woodcutting. The remaining 49,300 acres would retain their wilderness values.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

FORTIFICATION RANGE WSA

NV-040-177

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 41,615 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur on 1,470 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 40,150 acres would retain their wilderness values. The highly scenic central portions of the WSA would remain largely unaffected.

There would be no impact on exploration and development of mineral resources.

There would be no impact to exploration and development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.

There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 41,615 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of designation of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone. There would be no impact on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The 12 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Mechanical methods of vegetation conversion would not be allowed, therefore, conversion would be left to natural processes. A slower rate of vegetation conversion would have no impact on current grazing.

The harvest of 7,500 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of 120 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 1

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1 recommends 31,946 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 9,669 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur in the unsuitable portion on 200 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,470 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.

The harvest of 6,450 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of 75 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means. There would be no impact on vegetation conversions in the unsuitable portion.

TABLE MOUNTAIN WSA

NV-040-197

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 35,958 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Table Mountain WSA would occur on 2,450 acres in the northern and central portions of the WSA. The highly scenic values of the central portion of the WSA would be impaired. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be greatly reduced throughout much of the northern part of the WSA due to woodcutting and mining activity. The remaining 33,500 acres would retain their wilderness values, however, the perception of naturalness would be affected on an additional 3 percent of the WSA.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Table Mountain WSA.

There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation manipulation for habitat improvement.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 35,958 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities of solitude and naturalness on all but the extreme northern portion of the WSA. The highly scenic central portion of the WSA would be preserved in its pristine condition.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 30 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 16 acres if designation occurs.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The entire WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. All but one proposed project, a 5,000-foot drift fence, would be constructed. The absence of the drift fence would not affect current grazing.

The harvest of 16,870 cords of fuelwood, 11,850 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.

Recreational ORV use of 250 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

WHITE ROCK RANGE WSA

NV-040-202

PROPOSED ACTION (All Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 24,065 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of designation of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, elk habitat, and the pristine character of the unit.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 5 acres within the WSA. This exploration would be eliminated due to the lack of valid and existing claims. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. Favorability for exploration and development is considered low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Costs would be slightly higher for new project construction and one 3-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would have a negligible affect on grazing.

The harvest of 10,740 cords of fuelwood, 1,760 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 24,065 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the White Rock Range WSA would occur on approximately 1,950 acres. Most of the affected acreage would occur from vegetation removal. These disturbances would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 22,100 acres would retain their wilderness values.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the White Rock Range WSA.

There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions.

PARSNIP PEAK WSA

NV-040-206

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 53,560 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 34,615 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 8,200 acres. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and the eastern slopes of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 26,400 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 5 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire WSA. Development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.

The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Seventeen hundred and fifty acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 88,175 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designation of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa pine and Gambel oak stands.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. This includes 3,350 acres of perlite reserves. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 4 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 7 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development is not expected to take place.

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.

The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, 1,400 posts and poles, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

A 6,000-acre seeding and 3,000 acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 34,310 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 53,865 acres as nonsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of wilderness designation for the suitable portion of the WSA would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 8,870 acres in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and eastern slopes of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 45,000 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance or construction.

The harvest of 240 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. The proposed chainings and seedings within the nonsuitable portion would occur. There would be no impacts on vegetation manipulation.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 88,175 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 9,310 acres on the northern and southwestern portions of the WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would also be reduced. The highly scenic values within the WSA would not be impaired. The stands of ponderosa pine and Gambels oak, and the potential National Register district would not be affected by a no wilderness designation.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS WSA

NV-040-242

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 26,587 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 21,046 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the unsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 20 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the western bench.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Of the 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur within the suitable portion without wilderness designation, 2 of the miles would be foregone and one would be restricted to existing roads or ways. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the unsuitable portion.

There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 47,633 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Designation of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Of the 10 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation, 3 of these would be foregone and 7 would be limited to existing roads. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Recreational ORV use of 150 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 17,500 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 30,133 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the unsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area especially on the western bench. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities. The absence of .5 miles of pasture fence in the suitable portion of the WSA would result in some cattle drift which would affect the management of the pasture system.

There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 3 recommends 5,255 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 42,408 acres as unsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres in the unsuitable portion. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished. Designation of the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would preserve the outstanding wilderness values that are present, including Leviathan Cave.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion is identified as having low favorability for mineral resources and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities.

There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 47,633 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

There would be no impact to recreation ORV use.

WEEPAH SPRING WSA

NV-040-246

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 50,499 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 10,638 acres as nonsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 347 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight and one-half miles of fence and three pipelines totalling 13 miles would not be constructed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Recreational ORV use of 125 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 61,137 acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of designation of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 504 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 187 acres if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be located outside of the WSA to minimize impacts on the wilderness values.

All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The one exploratory well expected without wilderness designation would be foregone and the 1 mile of seismic exploration would have to be accomplished on foot. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development is not expected to take place.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Two pasture fences, a seeding, and four water developments would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated distribution would be foregone.

Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 33,873 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 27,264 acres as nonsuitable for designation.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, some of the high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 307 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable

portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight miles of fence and two water developments (pipelines) would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 61,137 acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS

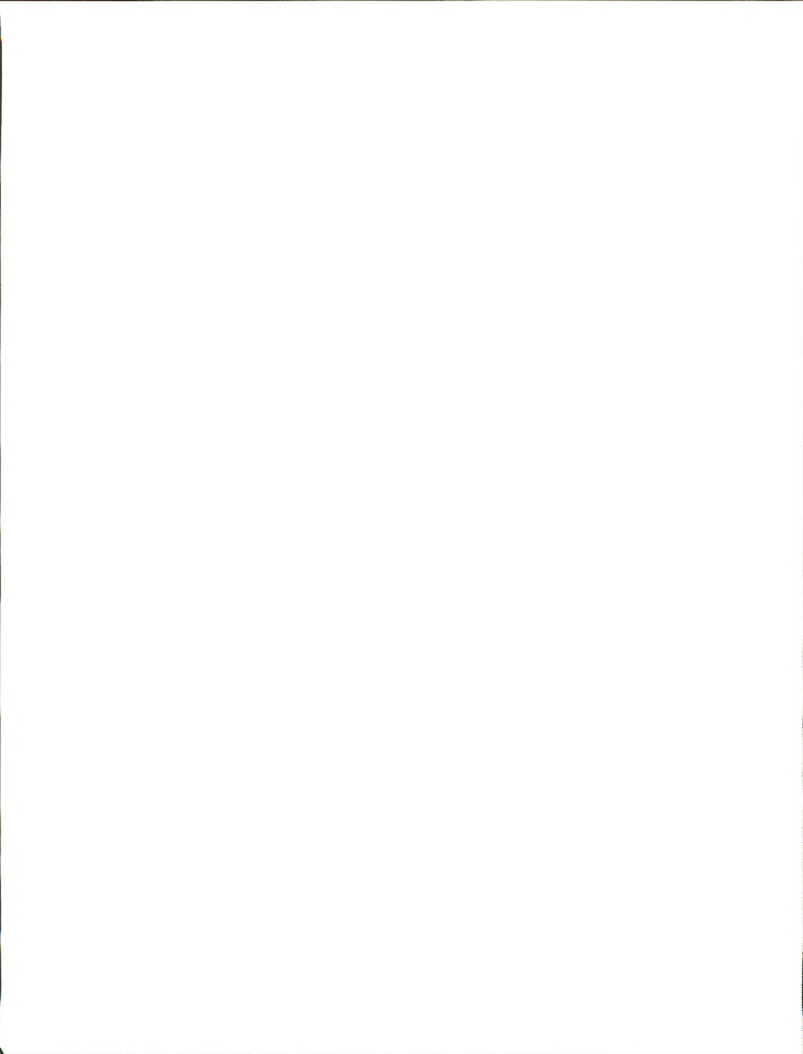
The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost in the northern portion of the Weepah Springs WSA. These wilderness values would also be affected to a much lesser degree throughout the WSA near range developments and by occasional ORV use. High scenic values in the northern portion of the WSA would be lost.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources.

All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

There would be no impact to recreation ORV use.



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the proposed actions are to manage and preserve the wilderness characteristics on 227,232 acres within 6 wilderness study areas (WSA's) in the Schell Resource Area and to manage the remaining 197,791 acres within 7 WSA's for purposes other than wilderness.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directs the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage the public lands and their resources under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Section 603 of FLPMA requires a wilderness review of BLM roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands. The BLM inventory process identified WSA's which have the mandatory wilderness characteristics of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Suitable or unsuitable wilderness recommendations for each WSA will be presented to the President by the Secretary of the Interior by October 21, 1991. The President has until October 21, 1993, to send his recommendations to the Congress. Areas can be designated wilderness only by an act of Congress. If designated as wilderness, an area would be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964.

TABLE 1

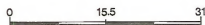
LIST OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

<u>WSA Name</u>	<u>WSA Number</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>County(ies)</u>	<u>Overlap with Other Districts/Resource Areas</u>
Mt. Grafton	NV-040-169	73,216	White Pine, Lincoln	Egan Resource Area
Far South Egans	NV-040-172	53,224	Lincoln, Nye	Egan Resource Area
Fortification Range	NV-040-177	41,615	Lincoln	
Table Mountain	NV-040-197	35,958	Lincoln	
White Rock Range	NV-040-202	24,065	Lincoln, Beaver	Cedar City, Utah/ Beaver River Resource Area
Parsnip Peak	NV-040-206	88,175	Lincoln	
Worthington Mountain	NV-040-242	47,633	Lincoln	Las Vegas District/ Caliente Resource Area
Weepah Spring	NV-040-246	61,137	Lincoln, Nye	

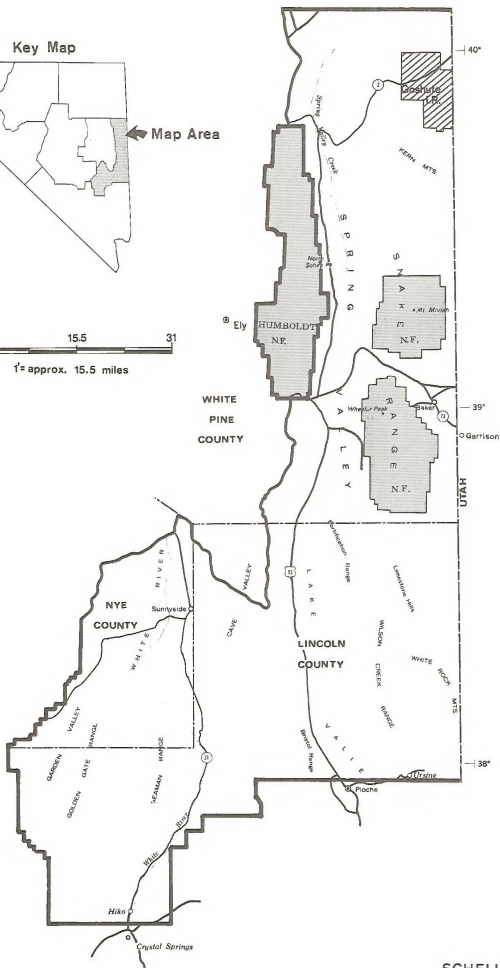
Key Map



Map Area



1" = approx. 15.5 miles



SHELL RESOURCE AREA
LOCATION MAP

LOCATION

The Schell Resource Area is located in east-central Nevada, encompassing portions of White Pine, Lincoln, and Nye Counties. Refer to the Location Map and Wilderness Study Area Map for the locations of the eight WSA's within the Resource Area.

PLANNING PROCESS

The BLM requires public lands to be covered by a multiple-use land use plan. The Schell Resource Area's land use plan is called a management framework plan (MFP). It was started during a transition period between the BLM's old and new planning systems. All land use plans started after October 1980 were required to use the new planning process and formulate a Resource Management Plan. (See 43 CFR 1601.) The Schell Resource Plan, however, was started before that date and is still using the old planning process. The plan is therefore called a transition MFP and this Wilderness EIS is called a Wilderness Transition MFP EIS.

Each WSA is studied through the BLM's planning process regardless of which type of plan is used. The Management Framework Plan was begun before the wilderness input could be included. By July 1982, the Area Manager had completed his preliminary wilderness recommendations, based on the Wilderness Study Policy, and they were included in the MFP. These recommendations later became the Preferred Alternative in the Draft EIS. The preferred alternatives in the draft document, with some changes listed below, became the proposed actions in this Final EIS.

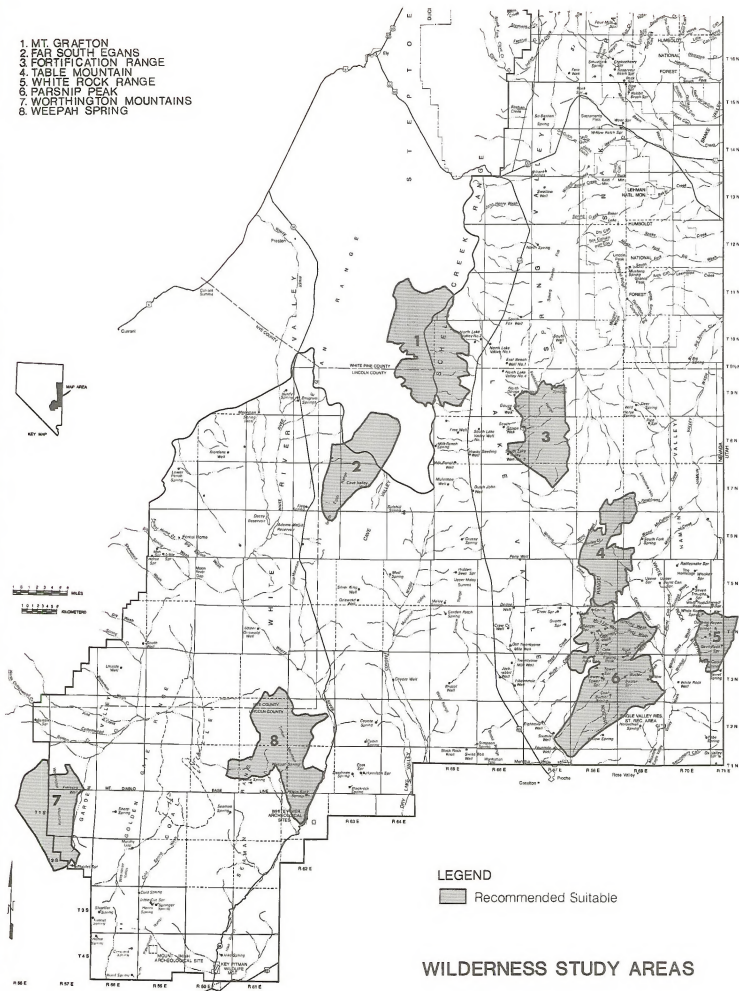
The Wilderness Study Policy, a national policy that guides the wilderness studies, was issued by the BLM in February 1982, after public review. It mandates two criteria and six quality standards that must be addressed during the wilderness studies. For more detailed information refer to the actual Wilderness Study Policy (available from any BLM office) or refer to Appendix A for definitions of the criteria and quality standards.

CHANGES FROM DRAFT EIS TO FINAL EIS

As a result of comments on the draft EIS, there was a change in the preferred alternatives for the Mount Grafton, Worthington Mountains, and Weepah Spring WSA's. In the draft EIS, the entire Mount Grafton WSA was recommended as nonsuitable. Commentors pointed out that the area's wilderness values were high and well documented, while the mineral values were speculative. It was argued that it would be better to recommend at least a portion of the area suitable and have the USGS/BM mineral survey completed so the final decision could be based on more detailed mineral information. In the Proposed Action, therefore, a portion of the Mount Grafton WSA with the highest wilderness values was recommended as suitable.

The east bench of the Worthington Mountains WSA was included in the Proposed Action in this document. Commentors stated that bench areas were underrepresented in the wilderness recommendations and that the Worthington Mountains east bench was an excellent candidate because of its nearly pristine condition and lack of conflicts.

1. MT. GRAFTON
2. FAR SOUTH EGANS
3. FORTIFICATION RANGE
4. TABLE MOUNTAIN
5. WHITE ROCK RANGE
6. PARSNIP PEAK
7. WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS
8. WEEPAH SPRING



LEGEND

 Recommended Suitable

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

Within the Weepah Spring WSA, acreage in the northwest corner of the suitable portion in the draft Preferred Alternative was deleted in the Proposed Action in this document. The reduced acreage recommended suitable in the Proposed Action was the result of additional information provided on the mineral values in this portion of the WSA. This information indicated that the mineral values were higher than originally estimated.

During preparation of the final EIS, a mapping error was noted on the White Rock Range WSA. A fence forming a portion of the southwest boundary of the WSA was mislocated. Correcting the error resulted in an increase of the WSA total acreage. The original 23,625 acres is now 24,065 acres, an increase of 440 acres. The recalculated acre figure is used in this document.

TABLE 2
CHANGES FROM DRAFT EIS TO FINAL EIS

Preferred Alternative Draft EIS		Proposed Action Final EIS	
WSA	Acres Recommended as Suitable	WSA	Acres Recommended as Suitable
Mount Grafton	0 acres	Mount Grafton	30,115 acres
White Rock Range	23,625 acres	White Rock Range	24,065 acres
Worthington Mountains	17,500 acres	Worthington Mountains	26,587 acres
Weepah Spring	53,317 acres	Weepah Spring	50,499 acres

SCOPING

Scoping for this document actually started in 1978 with the beginning of the wilderness review. Comment periods held during this early review focused mostly on the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics in the areas under review. Other issues began surfacing at that time, however. These same issues came up time and time again throughout scoping. Some of them dealt with potential conflicts with wilderness designation and other resource use. These included: mineral and energy conflicts, restrictions on livestock grazing, access for hunters and trappers, access to and restrictions on development of private land surrounded by wilderness, and restrictions on fuelwood and Christmas tree harvest. Other issues dealt with included: the loss of wilderness characteristics without protection, the need to provide primitive recreation opportunities to Nevadans, and the protection afforded wildlife and wildlife habitat. A more detailed discussion of the issues raised is presented at the end of this section.

On July 23, 1982, a "Notice of Intent" for the preparation of the Schell Resource Area Wilderness EIS/MFP Amendment appeared in the Federal Register to announce formally the beginning of the planning process. This initial phase involved developing the issues that the Schell Resource Wilderness EIS would be addressing. A public scoping period was held from July 23 to September 10, 1982. An active public involvement process aided in developing the EIS. Public opinion was elicited through public meetings in Ely, Reno, Pioche, and Baker. In addition, the Ely District initiated a mass mailing to the people and organizations on the wilderness mailing list; issued press releases to the newspapers in Nevada and Utah; and presented briefings to the Nevada State Clearinghouse, Nevada Congressional delegations, local governments, Native American groups, planning commissions, and civic organizations.

Development of Issues

Issues identified during the review process included the need to address impacts of wilderness designation on mineral resources, especially in the Mount Grafton, Worthington Mountains, and Weepah Spring WSA's; impacts of designation on livestock grazing; effects of designation on recreation use levels and associated impacts to the land; and impacts of nondesignation on wilderness values. Specific areas of concern included the lower end of the Parsnip Peak WSA, which local residents believed to be unsuitable for designation; effects of designation on private inholdings in several WSA's; and the need for protection of Leviathan Cave in the Worthington Mountains and the scenic values of the Fortification Range. The Mount Grafton WSA itself has become an issue since it is not only an area with mineral potential, but also an area of high wilderness values. Finally, the Nevada State Multiple Use Land Advisory Council has identified a need to examine closely the local social and economic effects of wilderness designation on public lands.

The environmental issues identified for analysis in this EIS follow.

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values such as naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSA's not be designated wilderness. The significance of these beneficial or adverse impacts is an issue for analysis in the EIS.
2. Impacts on Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing mineral resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of potential and known mineral resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

3. Impacts on Exploration and Development of Energy Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known energy resources by withdrawing designated lands from the mineral leasing laws. Development of existing energy resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions. The impact of wilderness designation on the development of potential and known energy resources is an issue for analysis in the EIS.
4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels. The impact of wilderness designation on the maintenance of existing developments and the construction and maintenance of new grazing and range management projects in the WSA's is an issue for analysis in the EIS.
5. Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest. Wilderness designation would prohibit the commercial or private harvest of fuelwood, Christmas trees, posts, and poles within the wilderness areas. It would also prohibit the commercial sales of pine nuts. The impact of foregoing the harvest of this resource is an issue for analysis in this EIS for the Mount Grafton, Far South Egans, Fortification Range, Table Mountain, White Rock Range, and Parsnip Peak WSA's. The analysis is not an issue for the Worthington Mountains and Weepah Spring WSA's because of their remoteness and lack of woodland products.
6. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORV's) in the WSA's. Eliminating this use would shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA's to adjacent lands. The impact of wilderness designation on recreational ORV use within the WSA's is an issue for analysis in the EIS.
7. Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation. Four WSA's, the Fortification Range, Table Mountain, White Rock Range, and Parsnip Peak, are located within Deer Herd Management Area number 23 (see Appendix B). The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has proposed extensive vegetation conversions in this area to improve habitat for deer. Impacts of wilderness designation on the proposed vegetation manipulations for these four WSA's is an issue for analysis in the EIS.

The following issues were identified in scoping, but were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIS. The reasons for setting each of the issues aside are discussed below.

1. Economic Impacts on Livestock Operations. Concerns were raised that livestock operators could be required to modify their operations within designated wilderness areas in a manner that would have significant adverse economic impacts on their business. This issue was considered but dropped from detailed analysis because the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy provides for the continued use of wilderness areas for livestock operations at levels appropriate for proper rangeland management.

Although the management practices of livestock operators in the four WSA's would be more regulated, they would continue as they did prior to wilderness designation subject to reasonable controls. The impact of wilderness designation on livestock operations as a result of curtailment of planned range developments is considered in Issue 4 above.

2. Impacts on Air Quality Classification. Concerns were raised regarding the interaction between wilderness designation and air quality classification. Since the Wilderness Management Policy states that BLM will manage all wilderness areas to comply with the existing state air quality classification for that specific area. Wilderness designation or nondesignation would not cause the air quality classification to change. This issue was, therefore, dropped from further analysis in the EIS.
3. Impacts on State and Private Inholdings. The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on State or private land inholdings in WSA's was identified as an issue in comments on the Draft EIS. This issue was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation.
4. Impacts of Wilderness Designation on Reintroduction of Bighorn Sheep. The Nevada Department of Wildlife has noted that bighorn sheep could be reintroduced in several WSA's. The reintroduction of bighorn sheep, if it occurs, would be independent of the designation of any of the WSA's as wilderness. In fact, in 1986 bighorn sheep were released in two WSA's. Since the Wilderness Management Policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native wildlife species and potential reintroduction efforts are speculative, this issue was not selected for analysis in the EIS.
5. Impacts on Water Quality. The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in each of the WSA's was identified by the Environmental Protection Agency. This issue was not considered in the EIS because the primary influence on water quality in these WSA's, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in any of the WSA's.

6. Impacts to Cultural Resources. Historic and prehistoric cultural resources are known to occur within all the WSA's. In many cases, these resources may be considered significant. Currently, one property, the White River Narrows Archaeological District within the Weepah Spring WSA, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is not expected that impacts to cultural resources occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation.

In addition, prior to any surface-disturbing activity such as mineral and seismic exploration, range developments, etc., a cultural resource inventory is required. For any cultural resources identified during the inventory, mitigating measures would be proposed to preserve the scientific information and/or lessen the physical impacts. The consideration given to cultural resources is in accord with Bureau responsibilities toward Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), to identify those properties which are eligible or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Bureau policy is to protect, manage, and avoid inadvertent loss of cultural resources (BLM Manual 8100.06). The framework for this policy is encompassed by a body of surface protection and antiquities legislation. Thus under any alternative, impacts to cultural resources would be approximately the same and these cultural resources would be protected and managed in accordance with legislative guidelines. The issue of impacts to cultural resources from wilderness designation was, therefore, dropped from further analysis.

7. Impacts to Hunter and Trapper Use. Impacts to hunters and trappers were raised as an issue, both in terms of the sport continuing and in terms of access. The Wilderness Management Policy states that hunting, fishing, and trapping are compatible with wilderness and will be allowed, subject to applicable State and Federal laws and regulations. All access routes cherrystemmed from the WSA's will continue to provide for motorized access. Consequently, there would be approximately the same level of impact with or without wilderness designation. This issue was, therefore, dropped from further consideration.
8. Impacts on Wildlife. Many comments during scoping and on the draft Schell Wilderness EIS expressed a general concern for wildlife without identifying specific issues associated with wildlife. An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified. Based on the projections of development in the eight WSA's, little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation. Prior to any surface disturbing activity, impacts to wildlife habitat are addressed in an Environmental Analysis of the proposed activity.

9. Impacts to Military Air Operations Over Wilderness Areas. Low level military flights over the Worthington Mountains and Weepah Spring WSA's occur frequently. It is the BLM's policy that these flights are compatible with wilderness. The Wilderness Management Policy states "Where low (military) overflight is a problem, or expected to become a problem, wilderness management plans will provide for liaison with proper military authorities, the Federal Aviation Administration, and contact with pilots in the general area in an effort to reduce low flight."
10. Impacts to Threatened or Endangered Species. Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identified two listed endangered species within several of the WSA's; the bald eagle and peregrine falcon.

Occasionally, bald eagles have been sighted within the boundaries of the Table Mountain WSA. The Parsnip Peak WSA to the south and the White Rock Range WSA to the east also have excellent potential for bald eagle sightings.

Although a few birds 'winter' in eastern Nevada (late November to May), especially in proximity to the Eagle Valley Reservoir area to the south, the eagles do not nest in this area. As a transient species in eastern Nevada, bald eagles will utilize tall trees such as white fir and ponderosa pine for roosting sites. These three WSA's do contain scattered stands of tall timber suitable for roosting, however, no roosting sites have been documented within the WSA's.

Within the WSA's involving bald eagles, similar disturbances involving mineral exploration and development would take place under the no wilderness alternative. Because of past mining interest, most of the areas where mineral exploration and development are expected have been previously claimed. Given valid and existing rights, some exploration and development is also anticipated to take place under the all wilderness alternative.

Regardless of wilderness designation, all mineral exploration and development notices and plans submitted under the 3802 or 3809 mining regulations would be reviewed on a case by case basis. Environmental Assessments would be written for the above actions and impacts to T&E species would be analyzed. Mitigating measures and stipulations would be recommended to protect any known habitat that could be adversely affected by mineral activities.

It is not anticipated that any of the mining activities analyzed in this document would adversely affect the bald eagle, as most mining activity occurs during the months in which the birds are not present (May through October).

Another form of disturbance anticipated within the above mentioned WSA's under the no wilderness alternative is vegetation manipulation, either through prescribed burn or mechanical conversion.

These activities would take place before or after the eagles have left the area and are planned for pinyon-juniper woodlands only, in the lower elevations. Stands of scattered tall timber in the higher elevations would not be affected by any of the above actions. It is the BLM's policy that conifers such as white fir and ponderosa pine not be removed because of their scarcity, importance to wildlife including bald eagles, and aesthetic values. Most stands of ponderosa pine within eastern Nevada are considered to be genetic pools and are preserved as seed sources.

The peregrine falcon is the other endangered species with potential of occurring in several WSA's, in particular, Weepah Spring, the Far South Egans, and the Worthington Mountains WSA's. Although numbers of the peregrine falcon are not well documented in eastern Nevada, there is potential for sightings in any of the WSA's at any time of the year.

The peregrine falcons are primarily a cliff nesting species and generally feed on smaller shore birds, passerine birds, and waterfowl. The three WSA's mentioned above have excellent potential habitat for these falcons.

The remote, inaccessible nature of potential falcon habitat in the high cliff areas of the WSA's provide nearly complete protection from man's disturbances. Also, the geologic formations which comprise potential habitat for the peregrine are not recognized as target areas for mineral exploration or extraction, therefore, disturbances from proposed mining activity would not deter the peregrine from utilizing suitable habitats within the WSA's.

Although the bald eagle and peregrine falcon may be sighted in certain WSA's, there are no documented roosting sites for the bald eagles or nesting sites for the peregrine falcon. In any of the actions or activities analyzed in this document, the needs of these birds would be considered under any of the alternatives on a case by case basis and they would be monitored and managed as endangered species, regardless of wilderness designation.

Several Category 3C plant species have been identified in or near several of the WSA's. Standard policy is to monitor and manage these state-listed sensitive species and their habitats so as to prevent any of these species from declining to threatened or endangered status. Thus, under any alternative, these species would be afforded consideration and protection. The issue of impacts to T&E species was, therefore, dropped from further analysis.

11. Impacts on Soil Erosion. It is not expected that the rate of soil erosion occurring from casual or unregulated uses would vary as a result of wilderness designation or nondesignation. Prior to surface disturbing activities such as mineral and energy exploration, range developments, etc. an environmental assessment would be prepared and possible impacts on soil erosion would be considered and mitigated as necessary. Therefore, the issue of impacts on soil erosion was dropped from further consideration since the impacts would be approximately the same under all the alternatives.

Development of Alternatives

Development of the proposed actions is guided by requirements of the Bureau's Planning Regulations, 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 1600. The BLM's Wilderness Study Policy (published February 3, 1982, in the Federal Register) supplements the planning regulations by providing the specific factors to be considered in developing suitability recommendations during the planning sequence.

The proposed actions recommend as suitable for wilderness designation those WSA's, or portions of WSA's, with high quality wilderness values. Under the proposed actions, 227,232 acres would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. This includes partial recommendations of 30,115 acres for Mount Grafton; 42,316 acres for the Far South Egans; 53,650 for Parsnip Peak; 26,587 for Worthington Mountains; and 50,499 acres for Weepah Spring WSA's. It also includes the entire 24,065 acre White Rock Range WSA. Neither the Fortification Range nor Table Mountain WSA's were recommended.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action Selected for Analysis

The BLM Wilderness Study Policy calls for the formulation and evaluation of alternatives ranging from resource protection to resource production. The alternatives assessed in this EIS include: (1) an all wilderness alternative for each WSA; (2) a no wilderness alternative for each WSA; and (3) one partial wilderness alternative for the Fortification Range, two partial wilderness alternatives for the Mount Grafton, Far South Egans, Parsnip Peak, and Weepah Spring WSA's; and three partial wilderness alternatives for the Worthington Mountains WSA.

In this document, the no action alternative, as required by the National Environmental Protection Act, and the no wilderness alternative are equivalent. Both advocate continuation of management as outlined in the existing MFP and recommend the WSA's as unsuitable for wilderness.

The all wilderness alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Partial wilderness alternatives can make suitable or unsuitable recommendations ranging between the all wilderness and no wilderness alternatives. A partial wilderness alternative can recommend as suitable for wilderness designation something less than the entire acreage of one WSA.

TABLE 3
ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

<u>Mount Grafton</u>	NV-040-169	<u>Suitable Acreage</u>
Proposed Action - Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1		30,115
All Wilderness Alternative		73,216
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2		43,649
No Wilderness Alternative		0
<u>Far South Egans</u>	NV-040-172	
Proposed Action - Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1		42,316
All Wilderness Alternative		53,224
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2		40,615
No Wilderness Alternative		0
<u>Fortification Range</u>	NV-040-177	
Proposed Action - No Wilderness Alternative		0
All Wilderness Alternative		41,615
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1		31,946
<u>Table Mountain</u>	NV-040-197	
Proposed Action - No Wilderness Alternative		0
All Wilderness Alternative		35,958
<u>White Rock Range</u>	NV-040-202	
Proposed Action - All Wilderness Alternative		24,065
No Wilderness Alternative		0
<u>Parsnip Peak</u>	NV-040-206	
Proposed Action - Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1		53,560
All Wilderness Alternative		88,175
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2		34,310
No Wilderness Alternative		0

Worthington Mountain NV-040-242

Proposed Action - Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1	26,587
All Wilderness Alternative	47,633
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2	17,500
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 3	5,225
No Wilderness Alternative	0

Weepah Spring NV-040-246

Proposed Action - Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1	50,499
All Wilderness Alternative	61,137
Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2	33,873
No Wilderness Alternative	0

Alternatives Considered But Dropped From Further Analysis

The Parsnip Peak Wilderness Emphasis Alternative (61,661 acres) from the draft document was dropped from further analysis in the final document. The Wilderness Emphasis Alternative, 8,011 acres more than the Proposed Action, (53,650 acres), was found to be similar to the Proposed Action in terms of wilderness values and resource conflicts. Since the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative does not contain any unique or substantially different values not already analyzed in this document, it was not carried forward for analysis.

Two alternatives for the Weepah Spring WSA in the draft document were dropped from further analysis in the final document. These alternatives are the Preferred Alternative (53,317 acres) and the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative (58,662 acres). Information provided by the public concerning mineral resources prompted a revision of the Preferred Alternative to the new Proposed Action. The Proposed Action (50,499 acres) is 2,818 acres less than the Preferred Alternative in the draft document. Because the alternatives were so close in acreage and impacts, the old Preferred Alternative was not carried forward for analysis in this document. The Wilderness Emphasis Alternative from the draft document was dropped from further analysis in the final document. The Wilderness Emphasis Alternative, 2,475 acres less than the All Wilderness Alternative, was found to be similar to the All Wilderness Alternative in terms of wilderness values and resource conflicts. Since the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative does not contain any unique or substantially different values not already analyzed in this document, it was not carried forward for analysis.

CHAPTER 2

Proposed Actions and Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSA's cannot be predicted with certainty, assumptions were made to allow the analysis of impacts under the proposed actions and alternatives. These assumptions are the basis of the impacts identified in this EIS. They are not management plans or proposals, but represent feasible patterns of activities which could occur under the alternatives analyzed.

MOUNT GRAFTON WSA NV-040-169

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 30,115 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 43,101 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 29,990 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. A 25-acre portion of the North Creek Scenic Area is already withdrawn from the mining laws. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 30,115 acres would be withdrawn from appropriation under the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to mineral exploration on claims existing at the time of designation. As of 1983, 16 mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 49 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated in areas presently recognized as being mineralized. A total of 7 acres of surface disturbance from limited access and drill pad construction would occur within the suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA as the result of exploration for mineral resources; 5 acres near the Schwartz Canyon and the Eagle Rock claims areas in the southern portion of the WSA, and 2 acres in the vicinity of the Lady Linda claims along the eastern boundary.

Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures will be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Exploration in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would disturb a total of 38 acres. Fifteen acres of surface disturbance would occur in the Lake Valley and Cave Valley claim areas; 18 acres of surface disturbance in the Marich claim area in the northern-central portion of the WSA; and 5 acres in BUH claim area on the western bench of the WSA. Exploration activities would include access and drill pad construction and trenches.

Economic mineralization is not anticipated within any portion of the WSA, therefore, development or production is not expected.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Mount Grafton WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Based on exploration trends, one exploratory well is expected to be drilled on the lower southeast border of the WSA. The 5-acre surface disturbance from drilling would include a 3.5-acre drill pad, cleared of vegetation and topsoil and a (1 mile) 1.5 acre access road. Also in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, it is expected that 9 miles of seismic exploration (vibroseis lines) would occur along the east bench of the WSA. Due to thick tree cover most seismic exploration is expected to take place along existing roads. Surface disturbance in the form of linear tracks would total 5 acres. A total of 10 acres of surface disturbance would result from energy exploration.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA. Exploration for or development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in three allotments within the Mount Grafton WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 351 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 1,870 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

A 125-acre crested wheatgrass seeding is located in the Robber's Roost area of the suitable portion of the WSA. The seeding would be maintained as necessary by either burning or hand grubbing.

Existing range developments within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA include 975 acres of three crested wheatgrass seedings, six stock reservoirs associated with the seedings, and one aqueduct, 2.5 miles long. The seedings would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Heavy equipment would be used as needed to maintain the reservoirs and the aqueduct. In addition, three fences totalling 10.5 miles

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are located within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Two of the fences, a 5-mile fence in the northwest corner and a 3-mile fence in the northeast corner, have no vehicular access. A 2.5-mile cherrystemmed fence and access road is located on the west side of the WSA. Vehicular maintenance would continue.

One vegetation conversion totalling 400 acres is proposed within the suitable portion of the WSA. The vegetation conversion could be accomplished through prescribed burns or limited wildfire suppression. If seeding is required, only native species would be used. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

Proposed range developments would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy as applied to construction and maintenance.

Proposed range development projects within the nonsuitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA include drift fences, reservoir construction, trough placement, and vegetation conversions. Four short sections of drift fence totalling less than 5 miles would be constructed on the southwest flank of Mount Grafton to control cattle movement. One 1.5-mile riparian protection fence of lodgepole pine poles, would be built along a portion of the north boundary of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Construction of the riparian fence and the lowermost drift fences would be achieved with the use of vehicles. Use of vehicles for the maintenance of these fences would also be permitted. Inaccessible portions of the drift fences would be constructed and maintained by workers on horseback or on foot. Several troughs are proposed along the existing Silver Creek pipeline on the west side of the WSA.

One vegetation conversion totalling 600 acres is proposed north of Wildcat Canyon. The vegetation conversion would be accomplished through prescribed burn or limited suppression of wildfires.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 30,115-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial fuelwood or Christmas tree harvest, or for commercial pinyon pine nut harvest. A 580-acre commercial pinyon pine Christmas tree sale area would be designated along the eastern benches of the WSA in the nonsuitable portion. Trees would be cut every 5 to 6 years with approximately 1,740 trees harvested per cut. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales based on nut crop availability would also take place in the same vicinity.

Recreation Management Actions

The 30,115-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 50 visitor days of ORV use are anticipated annually in this area. This low figure is based on the inaccessibility of the terrain with the exception of the Robber's Roost Basin area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the eight miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 43,101-acre unsuitable portion would continue to remain designated open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP. Management plans for the portions of the Mount Grafton Scenic Area outside of the suitable portion would have to be coordinated with the wilderness management plan.

Wildlife Management Actions

Construction of a large guzzler for elk is proposed for the northern part of the suitable portion of the WSA. Its design and construction would be determined by an environmental analysis based on the criteria set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 73,216-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 73,056 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. A 160-acre portion of the North Creek Scenic Area is already withdrawn from the mining laws. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 73,216 acres would be withdrawn from appropriation under the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to development on mining claims existing within the suitable portion of the WSA at the time of designation. As of 1983, a total of 65 mining claims existed within the WSA.

Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated in areas presently recognized as being mineralized. A total of 20 acres of surface disturbance involving minimal access and drill pad construction would occur within the WSA as a result of exploration for mineral resources. This would include 9 acres near the Schwartz Canyon, Eagle Rock, and Cave Valley claim areas in the southern portion of the WSA; 3 acres near the Lady Linda and Lake Valley along the eastern boundary; 6 acres in the Marich claim area in the northern-central portion of the WSA; and 2 acres in the BUH claim area in the western part of the WSA. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures would be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Economic mineralization is not expected to occur in this area. Therefore, development or production is not expected.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Mount Grafton WSA is considered low. Vibroseis exploration would be allowed only on existing roads and cherrystemmed routes. Exploration or development of energy resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA. Exploration for or development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in three allotments within the Mount Grafton WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 2,221 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include portions of three seedings totalling 1,100 acres, six stock reservoirs associated with the seedings, and one aqueduct, 2.5 miles long. The seedings would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Heavy equipment would be used as needed to maintain the reservoirs and the aqueduct.

In addition, three fences totalling 10.5 miles are located within the WSA. Two of the fences, a 5-mile fence in the northwest corner and a 3-mile fence in the northeast corner, have no vehicular access. A 2.5-mile cherrystemmed fence and access road is located on the west side of the WSA. Vehicular maintenance would continue.

Proposed range development projects within the Mount Grafton WSA include drift fences, trough placement, and vegetation conversions. Four short sections of drift fence totalling less than 5 miles would be constructed on the southwest flank of Mount Grafton to control cattle movement. One 1.5-mile lodgepole riparian protection fence would be built along a portion of the north boundary of the WSA. Construction of the riparian fence and the drift fences would be achieved without the use of vehicles. Maintenance for these fences would be accomplished by workers on foot or on horseback. Several troughs are proposed along the existing Silver Creek pipeline on the west side of the WSA.

Two vegetation conversions totalling 1,100 acres are proposed north of Wildcat Canyon. The vegetation conversions would be achieved through prescribed burn or limited wildfire suppression. If seeding is required, only native species would be used. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

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Proposed range developments would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The Mount Grafton WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use of woodland products. Commercial pinyon pine nut harvest would also not be allowed.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Mount Grafton WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 350 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 50 miles of cherrystemmed routes. Management of the North Creek and Mount Grafton Scenic Areas would be incorporated into the wilderness management plan.

Wildlife Management Actions

Construction of a large guzzler for elk is proposed for the northern portion of the WSA. Its design and construction would be determined by an environmental analysis based on the criteria set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

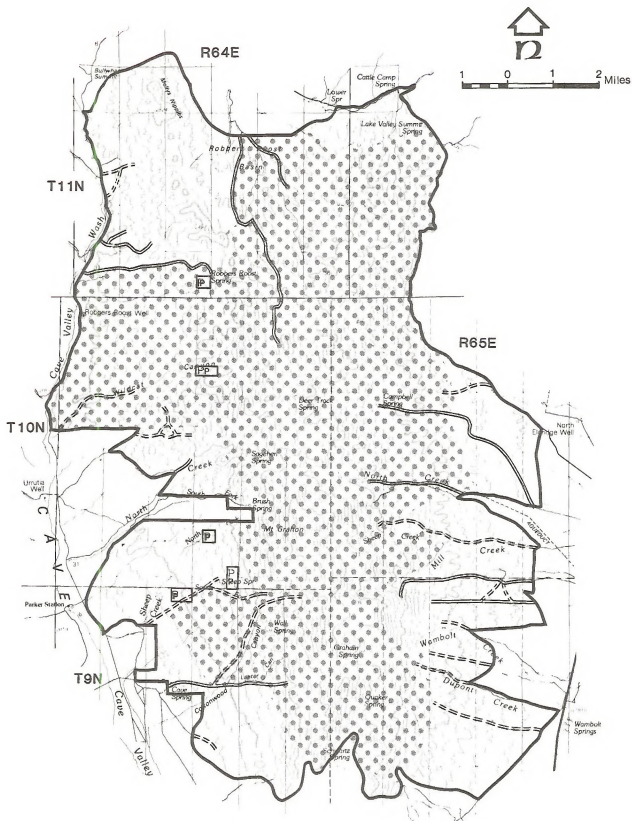
PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 43,649 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 29,567 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 43,524 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. A 125-acre portion of the North Creek Scenic Area is already withdrawn from the mining laws. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 43,649 acres would be withdrawn from appropriation under the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to development on mining claims existing within the suitable portion of the WSA at the time of designation. As of 1983, 30 mining claims were located within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 35 mining claims within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA.



PARTIAL ALTERNATIVE #2



CHERRY STEM ROAD



CHERRY STEM WAY

ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-169 MT. GRAFTON

MOUNT GRAFTON

A total of 13 acres of surface disturbance from limited access and drill pad construction would occur within the suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA as the result of exploration for mineral resources; 5 acres near the Schwartz Canyon and the Eagle Rock claim areas in the southern portion of the WSA; 2 acres on the eastern boundary in the Lady Linda claim; and 6 acres in the Marich claim in the north-central portion. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures will be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Exploration within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would involve a total of 20 acres of surface disturbance from associated activities in the Lake Valley and Cave Valley claim areas and the BUH claim block. Surface disturbance would result from access and drill pads construction, and trenching.

Economic mineralization is not anticipated within any portion of the WSA, therefore, development or production is not expected.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Mount Grafton WSA is considered low. Exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Based on exploration trends, one exploratory well is expected to be drilled on the lower southeast border of the WSA. Surface disturbance from drilling would include a 3.5-acre drill pad, cleared of vegetation and topsoil, and a one mile (1.5 acre) access road. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres. In the nonsuitable portion of the WSA it is expected that 9 miles of seismic exploration (vibroseis lines) would occur along the east bench of the WSA. Due to thick tree cover most seismic exploration is expected to take place along existing roads. Surface disturbance in the form of linear tracks would total 5 acres.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA. Exploration for or development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in three allotments within the Mount Grafton WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 900 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 1,321 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

A 125-acre crested wheatgrass seeding is located in the Robber's Roost Basin area of the suitable portion of the WSA. The seeding would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. One reservoir is located in the northeast corner of the suitable portion. No regular maintenance is required for the reservoir.

In addition, two fences totalling 5.5 miles are located within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3-mile fence in the northeast corner has no vehicular access. Maintenance on this fence would continue to be maintained by workers on horseback. A 2.5-mile cherrystemmed fence and access road is located on the west side of the suitable portion. Use of vehicles in maintenance would continue.

Existing range developments within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA include three crested wheatgrass seedings totalling 975 acres, five stock reservoirs associated with the seedings, and one aqueduct, 2.5 miles long. The seedings would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Heavy equipment would be used as needed to maintain the reservoirs and the aqueduct. One fence 5 miles long, located in the northwest corner of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, has no vehicle access. Maintenance on the fence would continue to be done by workers on horseback.

Two vegetation conversions totalling 1,100 acres are proposed within the suitable portion of the WSA. The vegetation conversions would be achieved through prescribed burns or limited wildfire suppression. If seeding is required, only native species would be used. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

Proposed range developments would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

Proposed range development projects within the nonsuitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA include drift fences, reservoir construction, and trough placement. Four short sections of drift fence totalling less than 5 miles would be constructed on the southwest flank of Mount Grafton to control cattle movement. One 1.5-mile riparian protection fence constructed of lodgepole pine would be built along a portion of the north boundary of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Construction of the riparian fence and the lowermost drift fences would be achieved with the use of vehicles. Maintenance for these fences would be accomplished by vehicular use also. Inaccessible portions of the drift fences would be constructed and maintained by workers on horseback or foot. Several troughs are proposed along the existing Silver Creek pipeline on the west side of the WSA.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 43,649-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial fuelwood or Christmas tree harvest, or for commercial pinyon pine nut harvest. A 580-acre commercial pinyon pine Christmas tree sale area would be designated along the eastern benches of the WSA in the nonsuitable portion. Trees would be cut every 5 to 6 years with approximately 1,740 trees harvested per cut. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales would also take place in the same vicinity as nut crops are available.

Recreation Management Actions

The 43,649-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 100 visitor days of ORV use are anticipated annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 14 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 29,567-acre nonsuitable portion would continue to remain open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP. Management plans for the portion of the Mount Grafton Scenic Area would be coordinated with the wilderness management plan.

Wildlife Management Actions

Construction of a large guzzler for elk is proposed for the northern part of the suitable portion of the WSA. Its design and construction would be determined by an environmental analysis based on the criteria set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 73,216 acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), 73,056 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the general mining and mineral leasing laws. A 160-acre portion within the North Creek Scenic Area, is already withdrawn from the mining laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development. As of 1983, a total of 65 mining claims existed within the WSA.

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, exploration efforts are expected to intensify in areas presently recognized as being mineralized, primarily those near the southern boundary of the WSA.

A total of 58 acres of surface disturbance from access route and drill pad construction, and trenching would occur within the Mount Grafton WSA as the result of exploration for mineral resources; 25 acres near the Schwartz Canyon, Eagle Rock, and Cave Valley claim areas in the southern portion of the WSA; 10 acres near the Lady Linda claims (Deer Trail Mine) and Lake Valley claim areas on the eastern boundary; 18 acres in the Marich claim areas in the north-central portion; and 5 acres on the BUH claims on the west bench.

Economic mineralization is not anticipated for this area therefore, development or production is not expected.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Mount Grafton WSA is considered medium. One exploratory oil well is expected to be drilled on the lower southeast corner of the WSA. Disturbance from drilling would include a 3.5-acre drill pad, stripped of vegetation and topsoil, and 1.5-acre disturbance for access construction. Disturbance will total 5 acres. Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated totalling 9 miles of vibroseis lines on the lower slopes of the east bench of the WSA. Due to thick tree cover, most seismic exploration is expected to take place along existing roads. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total about 5 acres. A total of 10 miles of surface disturbance would result from energy exploration.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA. Exploration for or development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in three allotments within the Mount Grafton WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 2,221 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include portions of three seedings totalling 1,100 acres, six stock reservoirs associated with the seedings, and one aqueduct, 2.5 miles long. The seedings would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Heavy equipment would be used as needed to maintain the reservoirs and the aqueduct.

In addition, three fences totalling 10.5 miles are located within the WSA. Two of the fences, a 5-mile fence in the northwest corner and a 3-mile fence in the northeast corner, have no vehicular access. A 2.5-mile cherrystemmed fence and access road is located on the west side of the WSA. Use of vehicles in maintenance would continue.

Proposed range development projects within the Mount Grafton WSA include drift fences, reservoir construction, trough placement, and vegetation conversions. Four short sections of drift fence totalling less than 5 miles would be constructed on the southwest flank of Mount Grafton to control cattle movement. One lodgepole pine riparian protection fence 1.5 miles long would be built along a portion of the north boundary of the WSA. Construction of the riparian fence and the lowermost drift fences would be achieved with the use of vehicles. Maintenance for these fences would be achieved by vehicular use also. Inaccessible portions of the drift fences would be constructed and maintained by workers on horseback or foot.

Two reservoirs are proposed in T. 11 N., R. 64 E., secs. 35 and 36. A total of 2 miles of low grade access would need to be constructed for development and maintenance. Several troughs are proposed along the existing Silver Creek pipeline on the west side of the WSA.

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - MOUNT GRAFTON

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 41,800 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.	The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities, bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 20 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 7 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 58 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 20 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the nonsuitable portion.	All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 2.5 miles of vibroseis line would be foregone due to tighter wilderness restrictions and absence of oil and gas leases. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and only minor impacts to new projects.
WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST	The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.	The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 1,600 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of piñon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	Recreational ORV use of 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.	Recreational ORV use of 350 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 2	NO WILDERNESS	IMPACT TOPIC
<p>The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 28,370 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.</p>	<p>Long-term negative impacts to the Mount Grafton WSA's wilderness qualities would occur on approximately 1,600 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and mining activity. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as naturalness would be diminished. The remaining 71,600 acres would retain their wilderness values.</p>	WILDERNESS VALUES
<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 38 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 13 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.</p>	EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES
<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.</p>	EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES
<p>There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.</p>	GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION
<p>The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.</p>	WOODLAND PRODUCT HARVEST
<p>Recreational ORV use of 100 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.</p>	RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE

MOUNT GRAFTON

Two vegetation conversions totalling 1,100 acres are proposed north of Wildcat Canyon. The vegetation conversions would be accomplished through prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires.

Woodland Products Management Actions

A 600-acre commercial pinyon pine Christmas tree sale area would be designated along the eastern benches of the WSA. Trees would be cut every 5 to 6 years with approximately 1,800 trees harvested per cut. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales would also take place in the same vicinity, based on nut crop availability. A commercial fuelwood sale would take place prior to prescribed burning in the 500-acre area of the Robber's Roost Basin identified for vegetation conversion. Approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of vehicular access would be constructed for this sale.

Recreation Management Actions

The Mount Grafton WSA would continue to be designated as open for recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP. Recreation management plans would be prepared for the North Creek and Mount Grafton Scenic Areas.

Wildlife Management Actions

Construction of a large guzzler for elk is proposed for the northern part of the WSA. It would have a 750-square-foot fenced catchment area covered with plastic, a 3,000-gallon storage tank, and a short pipeline to one or two troughs.

FAR SOUTH EGANS WSA NV-040-172

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

The Proposed Action recommends 42,316 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 10,908 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 42,236 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from the mining laws; 80 acres have already been withdrawn due to the special geologic area designation of Whipple Cave. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 42,316 acres would be withdrawn from the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to mineral exploration on claims located in the suitable portion of the WSA at the time of designation.

The Far South Egans WSA has low potential for mineralization. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the WSA boundaries and exploration, development, or production of mineral resources is not expected to occur.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA is considered low. Oil and gas exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion.

Based on current exploration trends, two exploratory wells are expected to be drilled on the southwest border of the unsuitable portion. Surface disturbance from drilling would total 10 acres, including 7 acres stripped of vegetation and topsoil for drill pads, and 3 acres for access construction.

Current levels of seismic exploration are expected to continue in both White River Valley and Cave Valley. A cumulative total of 15 miles of seismic lines are anticipated on the east and west alluvial benches of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 30 acres.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA with the exception of approximately 700 acres of moderate potential in the unsuitable portion. Development of geothermal resources, however, is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in two allotments within the Far South Egans WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 200 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 789 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

The suitable portion of the WSA contains only one range development. This .75-mile of fenceline would be maintained by workers on foot or horseback. The nonsuitable portion contains a well development and a 100-foot pipeline with a trough. These developments would continue to be maintained by persons in vehicles or on foot as necessary.

Approximately 1,800 acres of a 2,500-acre proposed vegetation conversion and seeding is within the suitable portion of the WSA. The conversion within the suitable portion would be achieved using prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. Chaining or cutting would not be allowed and reseeding would be with only native plant species. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area. The proposed well and trough associated with this vegetation conversion would be located outside of the WSA. Three fence projects are proposed within both the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the WSA. None of these projects would be allowed because they would not meet wilderness management objectives. These projects include two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion on the east side of the WSA and a 3-mile pasture fence on the west side of the WSA. A total of 3 of the 5 miles of proposed fence would be within the suitable portion of the WSA. Since the fences would be impractical if only built in the nonsuitable portion, the fence projects would not occur. All proposed range projects would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

The portion of the vegetation conversion (700 acres) in the nonsuitable part of the WSA on the east side would be accomplished by commercial or private fuelwood sales. Access to the area would be by cross-country vehicle travel. The entire 1,100 acre sagebrush conversion on the west side of the WSA would be accomplished by a prescribed burn or limited suppression of wildfire. A rangeland drill would be used to reseed the sagebrush conversion with crested wheatgrass and some native species. Portions of two proposed fences totalling 2 miles within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would not be built since they must extend into the suitable portion of the WSA to make them a feasible project. These projects were discussed above in the suitable section.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Woodland Products Management Actions

The entire 42,316-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial purposes. Commercial pinyon pine nut harvest would also not be allowed. A 700-acre commercial fuelwood sale would take place in the area identified for vegetation conversion within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA with about 4,200 cords of fuelwood harvested. Approximately 90 Christmas trees would be harvested every 6 years along a 30-acre strip on the eastern boundary of the WSA, also in the nonsuitable area.

Recreation Management Actions

The 42,316-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Less than 50 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Construction of the fence along the Highway 318 right-of-way has curtailed the ORV use along the west bench of the WSA. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and along 11 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 10,908 acre nonsuitable portion would continue to remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

Management specifics for Whipple Cave, located within the suitable portion of the WSA, would be contained within the wilderness management plan for the Far South Egans.

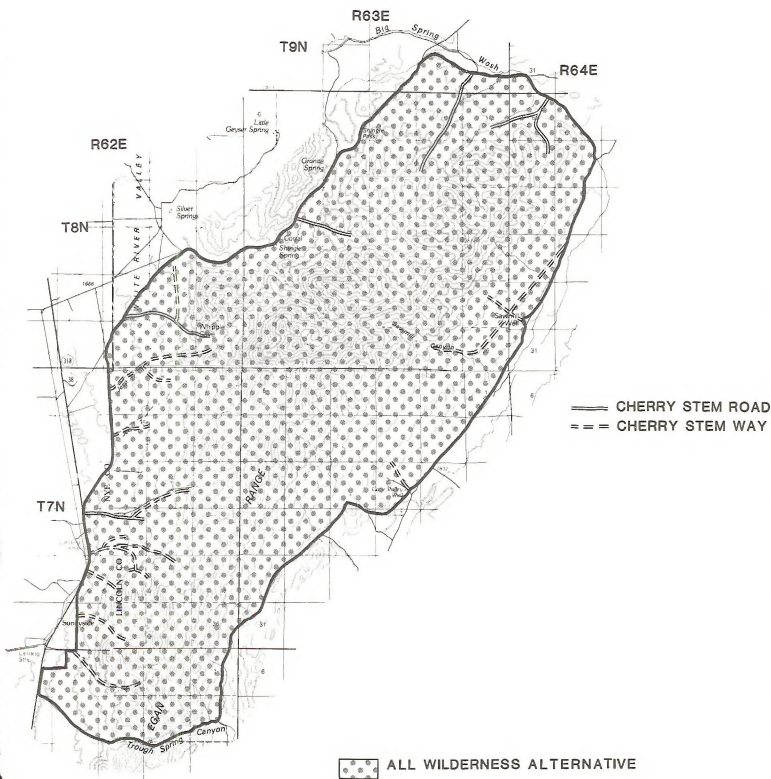
ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 53,224-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 53,144 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from the mining laws; 80 acres have already been withdrawn due to the special geologic area designation of Whipple Cave. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 53,224 acres would be withdrawn from the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to mineral exploration on claims located in the WSA at the time of designation.

The Far South Egans WSA has been rated as having low potential for metallic minerals. As of 1983, no mineral claims existed within the WSA boundaries and exploration, development, or production of mineral resources is not anticipated.



ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-172 FAR SOUTH EGANS

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Far South Egans WSA is considered low. Based on current exploration trends, one exploratory well for oil and gas is expected to be drilled on an existing lease on the southwest border of the WSA. Surface disturbance from drilling would total 5 acres, including 3 acres stripped of vegetation and topsoil for drill pads, and 2 acres for access construction. All disturbance would be reclaimed in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the wilderness management policy.

Seismic exploration would not be conducted within the boundaries of the WSA.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA with the exception of 700 acres of moderate potential on the southwest corner of the WSA. Development of geothermal resources is not expected to take place.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in two allotments within the Far South Egans WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 989 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments include .75-mile of fenceline along the western boundary, a 100-foot pipeline and trough also along the western boundary, and a well and trough along the eastern boundary of the WSA. The fenceline would be maintained by persons on foot or horseback and vehicles could be used in maintenance of the other developments as necessary.

Three fence projects are proposed within the WSA. None of these projects would be allowed because they would not meet wilderness management objectives. These projects include two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion on the east side of the WSA and a 3-mile pasture fence on the west side of the WSA. Two proposed vegetation conversions totalling 3,600 acres could occur using prescribed burns or limited wildfire suppression. Chaining or cutting would not be allowed and reseeding would only occur with native plant species. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

The proposed well and trough would be located outside of the WSA. All proposed range projects would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The Far South Egan Range WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial purposes. Commercial pinyon pine nut harvests would also not be allowed.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Far South Egans WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Fewer than 100 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and along the 28 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Management specifics for Whipple Cave, located within the WSA, would be contained within the wilderness management plan for the Far South Egans.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 40,615 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 12,609 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 40,535 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from the mining laws; 80 acres have already been withdrawn due to the special geologic area designation of Whipple Cave. Also, subject to valid and existing rights, 40,615 acres would be withdrawn from the mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to mineral exploration on claims located in the suitable portion of the WSA at the time of designation.

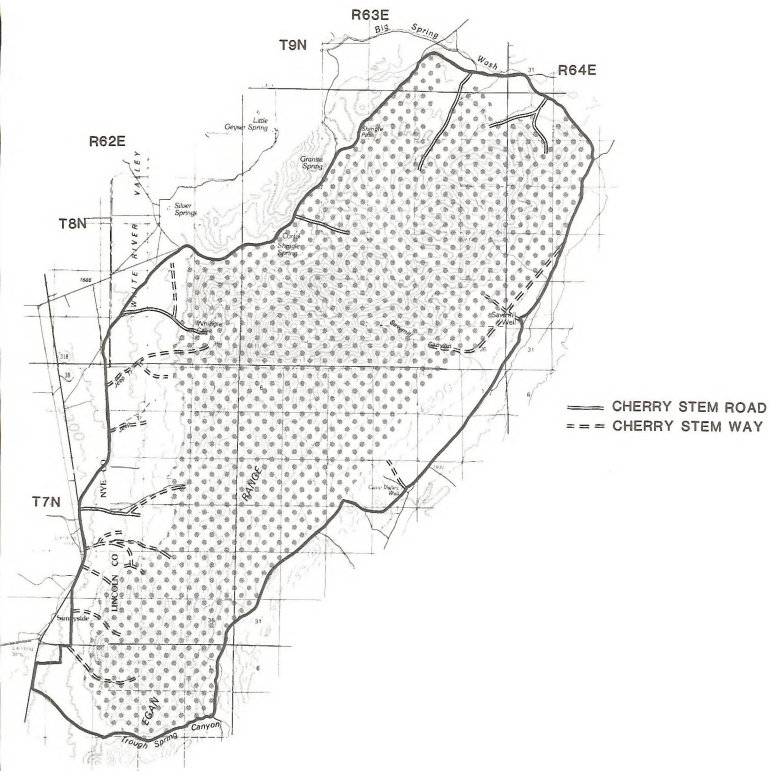
The Far South Egans WSA has been rated as having low potential for mineralization. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the WSA boundaries and exploration development or production of mineral resources is not anticipated.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Far South Egans WSA is considered low. Oil and gas exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion.

Based on current exploration trends, two exploratory wells for oil and gas are expected to be drilled on the southwest border of the unsuitable portion. Surface disturbance from drilling would total 10 acres, including 7 acres stripped of vegetation and topsoil for drill pads, and 3 acres for access construction.

Current levels of seismic exploration are expected to continue in both White River Valley and Cave Valley. A cumulative total of 15 miles of seismic lines are anticipated on the east and west alluvial benches of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 30 acres.



 PARTIAL ALTERNATIVE #2

ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-172 FAR SOUTH EGANS

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA with the exception of 700 acres of moderate potential within the nonsuitable portion. Development of geothermal resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in two allotments within the Far South Egans WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 150 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 839 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

The suitable portion of the WSA contains only one range development. This .75 mile of fenceline would be maintained by foot or horseback. The nonsuitable portion contains a well development and a 100-foot pipeline with a trough. These developments would continue to be maintained by persons on vehicle or foot as necessary.

Approximately 1,800 acres of a 2,500-acre proposed vegetation conversion and seeding is within the suitable portion of the WSA. The conversion, within the suitable portion could occur using prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. Chaining or cutting would not be allowed and reseeding would be limited to native plant species. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area. The proposed well and trough associated with this vegetation conversion would be located outside of the WSA. Three fence projects are proposed within both the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the WSA. None of these projects would be allowed because they would not meet wilderness management objectives. These projects include two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion on the east side of the WSA and a 3-mile pasture fence on the west side of the WSA. A total of 3 of the 5 miles of proposed fence would be within the suitable portion of the WSA. Since the fences would be impractical if only built in the nonsuitable portion, the fence projects would not occur. All proposed range projects would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

The portion of the vegetation conversion (700 acres) in the nonsuitable part of the WSA on the east side would be accomplished by commercial or private fuelwood sales. Access to the area would be by cross-country vehicle travel. The entire 1,100 acre sagebrush conversion on the west side of the WSA would be achieved through a prescribed burn or limited suppression of wildfire. A rangeland drill would be used to reseed the sagebrush conversion with crested wheatgrass and some native species. Portions of two proposed fences totalling two miles within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would not be built since they must extend into the suitable portion of the WSA to make them a feasible project.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 40,615-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial purposes. Commercial pinyon pine nut harvest would also not be allowed. A 700-acre commercial fuelwood sale of approximately 4,200 cords would take place in the area identified for vegetation conversion within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA with about 4,200 cords of fuelwood harvested. Additionally, an ongoing commercial fuelwood sale resulting in a harvest of 840 cords of fuelwood would be designated on approximately 140 acres along the northern boundary of the WSA in the nonsuitable portion. Approximately 90 Christmas trees would be harvested every 6 years along a 30-acre strip on the eastern boundary of the WSA, also in the nonsuitable area.

Recreation Management Actions

The 40,615-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Less than 50 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Construction of the fence along the Highway 318 right-of-way has curtailed the ORV use along the west bench of the WSA. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and along 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 12,609-acre nonsuitable portion would continue to remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

Management specifics for Whipple Cave, located within the suitable portion of the WSA, would be contained within the wilderness management plan for the Far South Egans.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 53,224-acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), 53,144 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. An 80-acre portion around Whipple Cave has already been withdrawn from mining laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development.

As of 1983, no mineral claims existed within the WSA boundaries. Due to the presence of some outcroppings of the Pilot Shale in the southeast portion of the WSA, it is anticipated that some exploration for disseminated gold would occur. Surface disturbance totalling 3 acres would result from access and drill pad construction. Development or production is not anticipated as a result of mineral exploration.

Development of one existing sand and gravel operation for maintenance of Highway 318, the "Sunnyside" stretch, is anticipated along the southwestern edge of the WSA. Cumulative disturbance from this operation would total five acres.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas potential within the Far South Egan WSA is considered low. Based on current exploration trends, two exploratory wells for oil and gas are expected to be drilled on the southwest border of the WSA. Surface disturbance from drilling would total 10 acres, including 7 acres stripped of vegetation and topsoil for drill pads, and 3 acres for access construction.

Current levels of seismic exploration are expected to continue in both White River Valley and Cave Valley. A cumulative total of 18 miles of seismic lines are anticipated on the east and west alluvial benches of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 36 acres.

Geothermal resource potential is considered low within the WSA with the exception of 700 acres of moderate potential on the southwest corner. Development of geothermal resources is not expected to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in two allotments within the Far South Egan WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 989 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments include .75 miles of fenceline and a 100-foot pipeline with a trough. Maintenance of these projects would continue as needed.

Several range developments would occur within the WSA. Three fencelines totalling 4.5 miles would be constructed along the east and west benches. Two-track roads next to a fence would be created as a result of fence construction and maintenance. One well and a trough would also be constructed in the WSA. Two vegetation conversions are proposed. The first is located in the sagebrush benches along the west side of the WSA. This 1,100-acre area would be cleared with a prescribed burn and then seeded with a rangeland drill using crested wheatgrass as the dominant species. The 2,500-acre conversion on the east side of the WSA would be accomplished through an intensive commercial fuelwood sale. Should seeding be required it would be applied either aerially or by hand.

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - FAR SOUTH EGANS

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on 1,850 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,060 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.	The result of designating the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to the lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.	All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One of the two exploratory oil wells in addition to 18 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.
WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST	The harvest of 10,800 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.	The harvest of 15,000 cords of fuelwood, 980 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impact of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.	Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 2	NO WILDERNESS	IMPACT TOPIC
<p>The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 1,900 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and would result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 10,630 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.</p>	<p>Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 3,900 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. In addition, historic values in Sawmill Canyon could be affected by commercial woodcutting. The remaining 49,300 acres would retain their wilderness values.</p>	<p>WILDERNESS VALUES</p>
<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.</p>	<p>EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES</p>
<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if wilderness designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.</p>	<p>EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES</p>
<p>There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the piñon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.</p>	<p>There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.</p>	<p>GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION</p>
<p>The harvest of 9,960 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.</p>	<p>WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST</p>
<p>Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.</p>	<p>There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.</p>	<p>RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE</p>

Woodland Products Management Actions

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, a commercial fuelwood sale would take place on the 2,500-acre area identified for vegetation conversion on the east side of the WSA, prior to the conversion. Three miles of access roads would be built to allow cutters better access. Additionally, an ongoing commercial fuelwood sale would be designated in a 250-acre strip along the northern boundary road and along the existing jeep trails. Approximately 1,500 cords of fuelwood would be cut and two new miles of roads would be created from the cutting effort.

Christmas trees would be commercially harvested along a 160-acre strip near the Shingle Pass road resulting in 800 trees cut. An additional 180 trees would be harvested from a 60-acre strip along the eastern boundary.

Commercial pinyon pine nut sales based on nut crop availability would take place throughout the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 53,224-acre WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use as designated in the Scheil MFP.

A cave management plan would be prepared for Whipple Cave. No surface disturbing activities are anticipated as a result of implementation of this plan.

FORTIFICATION RANGE WSA

NV-040-177

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 41,615-acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), the entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development.

There are no mining districts within the Fortification Range WSA. Due to a thick cap of tertiary volcanics overlaying older rock, favorability for mineralization in the Fortification Range is low. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the WSA, and there is no known indication of mineralization. Mineral exploration or development is not anticipated within the Fortification Range WSA.

Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the WSA is considered low due to tertiary volcanic lithologies. Drilling for oil and gas is expected to take place on an existing lease on the west side of the WSA. Surface disturbance for the one well would include a 3-acre drill pad and a 2-acre access.

A total of 12 miles of seismic exploration line have been walked into the west portion of the WSA. This past exploration has caused no disturbance. Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration (vibroseis) is expected, resulting in 12 miles of cumulative seismic line disturbing 24 acres in the form of visible linear tracks. No seismic exploration is anticipated on the east side of the WSA.

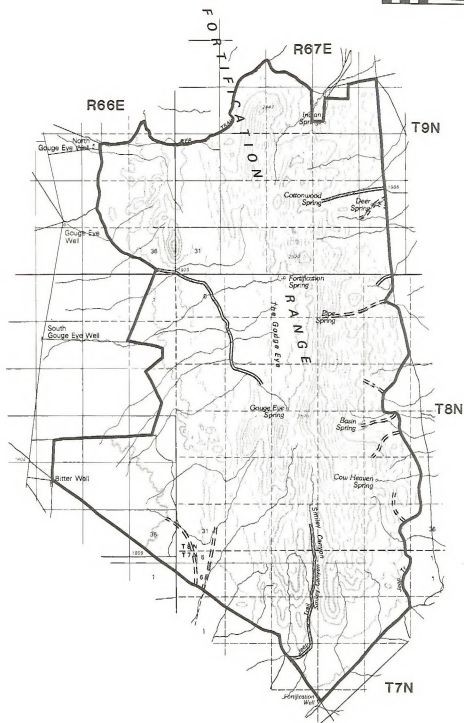
Geothermal resource potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in four allotments within the Fortification Range WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,215 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.



1 0 1 2 Miles



NONE PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)

== CHERRY STEM ROAD
== CHERRY STEM WAY

ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-177 FORTIFICATION RANGE

Existing range developments within the WSA include 75 acres of the Cottonwood Seeding Pasture, three spring developments, and three corrals. The seeding would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Two spring developments have no vehicular access and would not be maintained using vehicle. Cottonwood Spring has a 1-mile pipeline along an existing access route. Use of vehicles during maintenance would continue for this development. The three existing corrals located near the west and north boundaries of the WSA could be maintained. In addition, five fences, totalling 5 miles are located within the WSA. Two and a half miles of fenceline have vehicular access. Use of vehicles in maintenance would continue along the accessible portions of the fencelines. The remaining 2.5 miles of fenceline has no vehicular access and would be maintained by persons on foot or horseback.

Pinyon woodland in the southern portion of the WSA has been identified for conversion to increase forage and improve habitat by both livestock and wildlife interests. Approximately 2,000 acres would be converted by chaining methods. Seeding of crested wheatgrass and some native species would be achieved at the time of chaining. As a result of the vegetation conversion, approximately 10,800 cords of dead and down fuelwood would be available for commercial and private sales. Two miles of low-grade access would result from the chaining and subsequent fuelwood removal.

Woodland Products Management Actions

A 390-acre commercial pinyon pine Christmas tree sale would be designated along the eastern boundary of the Fortification Range WSA. Trees would be cut every 5 to 6 years with approximately 1,170 trees harvested per cut. Within the same 390-acre area, a commercial fuelwood sale would take place, allowing approximately 1,200 cords of fuelwood to be harvested over a period of years.

A 350-acre area on the west side of the WSA would be designated as a commercial fuelwood cutting area allowing 2,100 cords of fuelwood to be harvested over a period of years. Approximately 10,800 cords of dead and down fuelwood would be available for harvest in the southern portion of the WSA as a result of the chaining described above.

Commercial pinyon pine nut sales based on nut crop availability would take place on accessible areas of the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

The Fortification Range WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

A 5,000-acre scenic area would be designated in the Cottonwood Canyon area to protect and manage the highly scenic geologic features. A management plan would be drafted to guide the management of the area.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 18,500 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion for the improvement of habitat for mule deer, and sage grouse within the Fortification Range WSA. Only 3,800 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the wildlife goals. Several of the identified conversion areas overlap with projects proposed by range and forestry interests. Of the ideal 3,800 acres to be converted, 2,740 acres would be converted by range and forestry projects. Refer to these sections for more detailed information. Because of the area's low priority no specific wildlife conversion projects are anticipated.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 41,615-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 41,615 acres of the Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to development on any mining claims that exist at the time of designation.

There are no mining districts within the Fortification Range WSA. Due to a thick cap of tertiary volcanics overlaying older rock, favorability for mineralization in the Fortification Range is low. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the WSA, and there is no known indication of mineralization. Mineral exploration or development is not anticipated within the Fortification Range WSA.

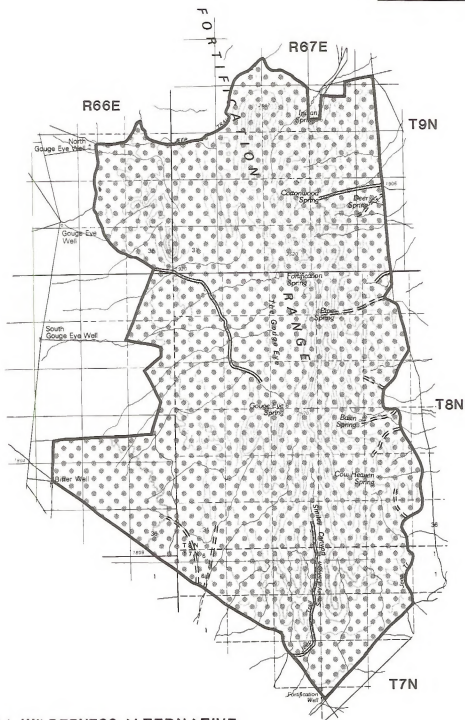
Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the Fortification Range WSA is considered low due to lithologies. Drilling for oil and gas is expected to take place on an existing lease on the west side of the WSA. Surface disturbance for the one well would include a 3-acre drill pad and a 2-acre access. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres.

A total of 12 miles of seismic exploration line have been walked into the west portion of the WSA. This past exploration has not caused any disturbance. Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration is expected to continue at current levels resulting in an additional 6 miles of cumulative seismic line. These lines would be set by persons on foot and would result in no additional disturbance. Seismic exploration is not anticipated on the east side of the WSA.



1 0 1 2 Miles



ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

— CHERRY STEM ROAD
== CHERRY STEM WAY

ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-177 FORTIFICATION RANGE

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Geothermal resource potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in four allotments within the Fortification Range WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,215 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include 75 acres of the Cottonwood Seeding Pasture, three spring developments, and three corrals. The seeding would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Two spring developments have no vehicular access and would not be maintained using vehicles. Cottonwood Spring has a 1-mile pipeline along a cherrystemmed access route. Vehicular maintenance would continue for this development. The three existing corrals, located near the west and north boundaries of the WSA, could be maintained. In addition, five fences, totalling 5 miles, are located within the WSA. Two and a half miles of fenceline are located along cherrystemmed routes. Vehicular maintenance would continue along the cherrystemmed portions of the fencelines. The remaining 2.5 miles of fenceline has no vehicular access and would be maintained by workers on foot or horseback.

Pinyon woodland in the southern portion of the WSA has been identified for conversion to increase wildlife forage and improve habitat by both livestock and wildlife interests. Vegetation conversion could be accomplished only by limited suppression of wildfires, since the area is not conducive to prescribed burning. If seeding is required only native species would be used. Seeding would be done either by hand or aerial methods. Any limited suppression of wildfires within the WSA would adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The Fortification Range WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial purposes. Commercial pinyon pine nut harvest would also not be allowed.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Fortification Range WSA would be closed to ORV use. Approximately 120 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and along the 16 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 18,500 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Fortification Range WSA for the purposes of improving habitat for mule deer, and sage grouse. Only 3,800 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. Because of the area's lower priority, limited wildfire suppression would be the only practical means of conversion. Under the All Wilderness Alternative, limited suppression of wildfires could be used to improve wildlife habitat. The specifics for limited suppression of wildfire would be incorporated into the fire management plan for the WSA as part of the area's wilderness management plan.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 1

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1 recommends 31,946 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 9,669 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to development on any mining claims that exist at the time of designation,.

There are no mining districts within the Fortification Range WSA. Due to a thick cap of tertiary volcanics overlaying older rock, favorability for mineralization in the Fortification Range is low. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the WSA, and there is no known indication of mineralization. Mineral exploration or development is not anticipated within either the suitable or the unsuitable portion of the Fortification Range WSA.

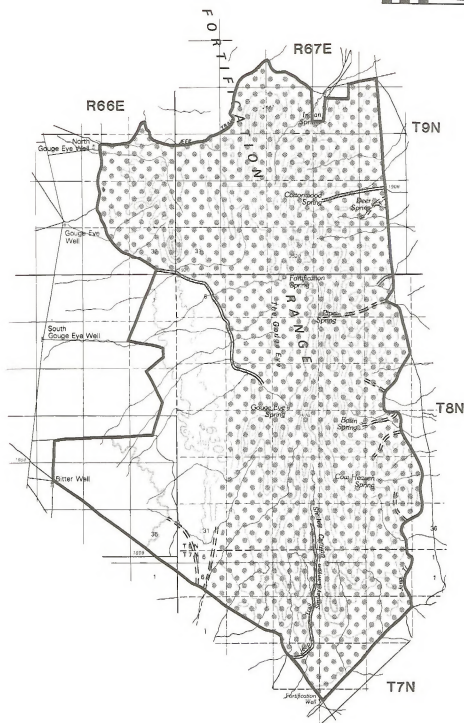
Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the WSA is low. Exploration or development of oil and gas or other leasable minerals is not expected to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA.

The drilling of one exploratory well on an existing lease is expected to take place in the unsuitable portion on the west side of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include a 3-acre drill pad and 2 acres of disturbance for access. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres.



1 0 1 2 Miles



PARTIAL ALTERNATIVE #1

== CHERRY STEM ROAD

- - - CHERRY STEM WAY

ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-177 FORTIFICATION RANGE

A total of 5 miles of seismic exploration line have been walked into the west portion of the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration has resulted in no surface disturbance. Based on exploration trends, seismic exploration is expected to continue at current levels resulting in an additional 3 miles of cumulative line within the suitable portion of the WSA. These lines would be accomplished by persons on foot and would result in no surface disturbance.

A total of 7 miles of seismic line have crossed the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These lines were also walked in and have resulted in no surface disturbance. In addition, 9 miles of vibroseis seismic lines are anticipated resulting in 18 acres of disturbance in the form of visible two-track routes within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Geothermal potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or the nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in four allotments within the Fortification Range WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 550 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 665 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

All proposed and existing range development projects are within the suitable portion of the WSA. Existing range developments include 75 acres of the Cottonwood Seeding Pasture, three spring developments, and three corrals. The seeding would be maintained as necessary either by burning or hand grubbing. Two spring developments have no vehicular access and would not be maintained by persons using vehicles. Cottonwood Spring has a 1-mile pipeline along a cherrystemmed access route. Vehicular maintenance would continue for this development. The three existing corrals, located near the west and north boundaries of the WSA, could be maintained. In addition, five fences totalling 5 miles are located within the WSA. Two and a half miles of fenceline are located along cherrystemmed routes. Use of vehicles during maintenance would continue along the cherrystemmed portions of the fencelines. The remaining 2.5 miles of fenceline has no vehicular access and would be maintained by workers on foot or horseback.

Pinyon woodland in the southern portion of the WSA has been identified for conversion to increase forage and improve habitat by both livestock and wildlife interests. Vegetation conversion could be achieved only by limited suppression of wildfires, since the area is not conducive to prescribed burning. If seeding is required only native species would be used. Seeding would be done either by hand or by aerial methods. Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the area.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 31,946-acre suitable portion of the Fortification Range WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial purposes or for commercial pinyon pine nut harvest.

A 175-acre commercial fuelwood sale would be designated in the west part of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, allowing approximately 1,050 cords of fuelwood to be harvested over a period of years. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales based on nut crop availability would take place on accessible areas of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Recreation Management Actions

The 31,946-acre suitable portion of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 75 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and along the nine miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 9,669-acre nonsuitable area would continue to remain designated as open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 18,500 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion for the purposes of improving habitat for mule deer, and sage grouse within the Fortification Range WSA. Only 3,800 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. Because of the area's lower priority, limited wildfire suppression would be the only practical means of conversion in the suitable portion. Within the suitable portion of the WSA, limited suppression of wildfires could be used to improve wildlife habitat. The specifics for limited suppression of wildfire would be incorporated into the fire management plan for the WSA as part of the area's wilderness management plan. A 175-acre commercial fuelwood sale on the west side of the WSA in the nonsuitable portion would result in a partial clearing of the trees, thus benefiting wildlife.

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - FORTIFICATION RANGE

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS	PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 1
WILDERNESS VALUES	Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur on 1,470 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 40,150 acres would retain their wilderness values. The highly scenic central portions of the WSA would remain largely unaffected.	The impact of designation of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA.	The result of designating 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur in the unsuitable portion on 200 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,470 unsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	There would be no impact on exploration and development of mineral resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone. There would be no impact on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	There would be no impact to exploration and development of energy resources.	All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The 12 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place.	Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Mechanical methods of vegetation conversion would not be allowed, therefore, conversion would be left to natural processes. A slower rate of vegetation conversion would have no impact on current grazing.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.
WOODLAND PRODUCT HARVEST	There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.	The harvest of 7,500 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.	The harvest of 6,450 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.	Recreational ORV use of 120 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Recreational ORV use of 75 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.
VEGETATION MANIPULATION	There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.	Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.	Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means. There would be no impact on vegetation conversions in the unsuitable portion.

TABLE MOUNTAIN WSA NV-040-197

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 35,958-acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), the entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the general mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development.

The northern portion of the WSA lies within the Atlanta/Silver Peak Mining District. The Atlanta Mine, a small modern producing mine, is located 2 miles north of the WSA. As of 1983, a total of 124 mining claims existed within the WSA.

Mineral exploration and development within several areas of the WSA would result in a total of 30 acres of disturbance under this alternative. An exploration program targeting precious metal epithermal vein mineralization in the east-central portion of the WSA would result in a total of 4 acres of disturbance associated with drill pad construction, and 1.5 miles of access construction. A similar exploration program is anticipated to occur in two project areas in the northern portion of the WSA. A total of 6 acres of disturbance would result from drill pad construction, 1.5 miles of access and upgrading of an existing cherrystemmed route.

A small open pit mine is anticipated to be developed just within the northern boundary of the WSA near the existing Atlanta Mine. Disturbance from this development would total 20 acres, involving 12 acres for the open pit, and 8 acres for the waste dumps. Ore from the mine would be hauled to the existing facility at Atlanta for processing. The mine, located along the existing boundary road would involve major upgrading of the boundary road. The mine is expected to be in operation 4 years.

Energy Management Actions

Oil, gas, and geothermal potential for the Table Mountain WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of these energy resources is not anticipated to occur within the Table Mountain WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Table Mountain WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,797 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.



R69E

T7N

T6N

T5N

NONE

1000

1000

1000

1000

ALTERNATIVES

NV-040-197 TABLE MOUNTAIN

TABLE MOUNTAIN

Existing range developments within the Table Mountain WSA are approximately 1 mile of the Bowling Fence which forms a portion of the southern boundary of the WSA. Maintenance for this fence is accomplished by foot or horseback, due to lack of current access. No other range developments exist within the WSA boundaries.

Proposed range developments for the Table Mountain WSA include a drift fence, spring developments, and a riparian enclosure. A drift fence totalling approximately 5,000 feet would be constructed east of Willow Tub Spring to control cattle movement. Construction and maintenance for this fence would be accomplished by cross-country vehicle use. Four springs; Willow Tub, Bradshaw, Table Mountain, and Horse Canyon, are proposed to be developed with spring boxes and associated troughs. Willow Tub Spring would have a 200 foot pipeline extending from the springbox. In addition, a 2-acre enclosure for riparian protection would be constructed below Willow Tub Spring. Spring developments would be accomplished with the use of a backhoe. Maintenance for the springs and the enclosure would be accomplished by vehicle where access exists and foot or horseback for developments with no vehicular access.

Woodland Products Management Actions

A 2,160-acre commercial sale area for Christmas trees and fuelwood would be designated in the north part of the Table Mountain WSA. Approximately 10,800 Christmas trees would be cut every 6 years and 15,120 cords of fuelwood would be harvested. A 250-acre commercial sale for Christmas trees and fuelwood would be designated in the west-central portion of the WSA. Approximately 1,050 Christmas trees would be cut every 6 years and 1,750 cords of fuelwood would be harvested. Approximately 4 miles of access would result from commercial harvest. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales would take place in accessible areas of the WSA, based on nut crop availability.

Recreation Management Actions

The Table Mountain WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 17,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Table Mountain WSA for purposes of improving habitat for mule deer, elk, and sage grouse. Only 3,500 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. Table Mountain WSA has a moderate priority for habitat improvement through vegetation conversion in the northern portion and western boundary. Some of these identified conversion areas, however, overlap with Christmas tree and fuelwood sale areas proposed by the forestry program. The Christmas tree and fuelwood sales would result in the partial clearing of the trees. These projects are discussed in more detail under the "Woodland Products Management Actions" section. A 960-acre pinyon woodland conversion in the northwestern corner of the WSA would be accomplished through a prescribed burn.

In addition, the wildlife program has proposed the Table Mountain Meadow restoration project. Designed to save sage grouse habitat on top of Table Mountain, the project would involve the rehabilitation of Willow Tub Spring that waters a key upland meadow. The spring development would involve the use of a backhoe. Other heavy equipment would be used to upgrade the boundary road which provides partial access to the spring. This development is discussed under the 'Range Management Actions' Section.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 35,958-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 35,958 acres of the Table Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted prior to development on mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation. As of 1983, a total of 124 claims existed within the WSA.

The northern portion of the WSA lies within the Atlanta/Silver Peak Mining District. The Atlanta Mine, a small modern producing mine is located 2 miles north of the WSA.

Mineral exploration and development within the WSA would result in a total of 16 acres of disturbance under this alternative. Prior to approval of a plan of operation, an exploration program targeting precious metal epithermal vein mineralization in two project areas in the northern portion of the WSA would result in a total of 2 acres of disturbance associated with minimal drill pad construction, 1.5 miles of limited access and upgrading of an existing cherrystemmed route. A small open pit mine is anticipated to be developed just within the northern boundary of the WSA near the existing Atlanta Mine. Disturbance from this development would total 14 acres, involving 8 acres for the open pit, and 6 acres for the waste dumps. Ore from the mine would be hauled to the existing facility at Atlanta for processing. The mine, located along the existing boundary road would involve major upgrading of the boundary road. The mine is expected to be in operation 4 years.

Energy Management Actions

Oil, gas, and geothermal potential for the Table Mountain WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of these energy resources is not anticipated to occur within the Table Mountain WSA regardless of designation.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Table Mountain WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,797 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the Table Mountain WSA are approximately 1 mile of the Bowling Fence which forms a portion of the southern boundary of the WSA. Maintenance for this fence is accomplished by foot or horseback due to lack of current access. No other range developments exist within the WSA boundaries.

Proposed range developments for the Table Mountain WSA include a drift fence, spring developments, and a riparian enclosure. The drift fence totalling approximately 5,000 feet would not be constructed east of Willow Tub Spring. Four springs; Willow Tub, Bradshaw, Table Mountain, and Horse Canyon, are proposed to be developed with spring boxes with a .5-acre fenced enclosure and associated troughs. Willow Tub Spring would have a 200 foot pipeline extending from the springbox. In addition, a 2-acre enclosure for riparian protection would be constructed below Willow Tub Spring. A backhoe, using cross-country access, could be used for construction of the spring developments. Maintenance would be done on foot or horseback. All proposed developments of the spring sources and fences would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The Table Mountain WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use. Commercial pinyon nut harvest would also not be allowed.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Table Mountain WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 250 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads the 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 17,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Table Mountain WSA for purposes of improving habitat for mule deer, elk, and sage grouse. Only 3,500 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. The area has moderate priority for conversion. A 960-acre pinyon woodland conversion in the northwest corner of the WSA would be accomplished through a prescribed burn. Additionally, limited suppression of wildfires could be used to restore wildlife habitat. Mechanical methods such as chaining would not be allowed. Specifics for habitat improvement using fire would have to be incorporated into the fire management plan for the Table Mountain WSA as part of the WSA's wilderness management plan.

TABLE MOUNTAIN

The Table Mountain Meadow restoration project, proposed to save sage grouse habitat on Table Mountain, involves the development of Willow Tub Spring that waters a key upland meadow. Refer to the Range Management Action Section above for more detail on the development. Development of the spring would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to construction and maintenance.

TABLE 7
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - TABLE MOUNTAIN

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	Long-term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Table Mountain WSA would occur on 2,450 acres in the northern and central portions of the WSA. The highly scenic values of the central portion of the WSA would be impaired. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be greatly reduced throughout much of the northern part of the WSA due to woodcutting and mining activity. The remaining 33,500 acres would retain their wilderness values, however, the perception of naturalness would be affected on an additional 3 percent of the WSA.	The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities of solitude and naturalness on all but the extreme northern portion of the WSA. The highly scenic central portion of the WSA would be preserved in its pristine condition.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 30 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 16 acres if designation occurs.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.	All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The entire WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Table Mountain WSA.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. All but one proposed project, a 5,000-foot drift fence, would be constructed. The absence of the drift fence would not affect current grazing.
WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST	There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.	The harvest of 16,870 cords of fuelwood, 11,850 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial sales of piñon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.	Recreational ORV use of 250 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
VEGETATION MANIPULATION	There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation manipulation for habitat improvement.	Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

WHITE ROCK RANGE WSA NV-040-202

PROPOSED ACTION (All Wilderness Alternative)

The Proposed Action recommends the entire 24,065-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 24,065 acres of the White Rock Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims that exist at the time of designation, prior to development.

Mining activity has not taken place within the White Rock Range WSA and as of 1983, one mining claim was present. Exploration and development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur within the White Rock Range WSA.

Energy Management Actions

Oil, gas, and geothermal potential for the White Rock Range WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of these energy resources is not anticipated to take place within the White Rock Range WSA regardless of designation.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the White Rock Range WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,181 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the White Rock Range WSA are approximately 2.5 miles of the White Rock Wash Seeding Fence which forms a portion of the southwest boundary of the WSA. Maintenance for this fence is accomplished by vehicle use along a primitive two-track route. No other range developments exist within the WSA boundaries.

Proposed range developments for the White Rock Range WSA include two spring developments and one vegetative treatment.

Development of White Rock and Wildcat Springs with springboxes, associated troughs, and fenced riparian enclosures, would be subject to the wilderness protection constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy, as applied to maintenance and construction. Under this alternative, a 3-mile pipeline from Wildcat Spring would not be constructed. Pinyon woodland in the western portion of the WSA has been identified for conversion by both livestock and wildlife interests to increase forage and improve habitat.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Approximately 1,000 acres would be converted through a prescribed burn. Additional acreage for conversion could be accomplished through limited suppression of wildfire. Specifics for vegetation conversion using fire would be incorporated into the fire management plan for the White Rock Range WSA as part of the WSA's wilderness management plan.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The White Rock Range WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use. Commercial pinyon nut harvest would also not be allowed.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire White Rock Range WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Fewer than 100 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 4 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 7,000 acres within the west side of the White Rock Range WSA as suitable for vegetation conversion for improving habitat for mule deer, and elk. Only 2,000 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. A 1,000-acre prescribed burn would occur on the west side of the WSA as part of a proposed range project. Refer to the range section for more information. Limited wildfire suppression could be used to restore additional wildlife habitat. Mechanical means such as chaining would not be allowed. Specifics for habitat improvement using fire would have to be incorporated into the fire management plan for the White Rock Range as part of the area's wilderness management plan.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 24,065-acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), the entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would not be required. As of 1983, one mining claim was located within the WSA.

A total of 5 acres of disturbance would result from an exploration program targeting precious metal epithermal vein mineralization in the southeastern portion of the WSA. Disturbance would result from the construction of approximately 2 miles of access road and 10 drill pads. Mineral production is not expected to occur as a result of exploration for mineral resources.

Energy Management Actions

Oil, gas, and geothermal potential for the White Rock Range WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of these energy resources is not anticipated to occur within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the White Rock Range WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,181 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the White Rock Range WSA are approximately 2.5 miles of the White Rock Wash Seeding Fence which forms a portion of the southwest boundary of the WSA. Maintenance for this fence is accomplished by vehicle use along a primitive two-track route. No other range developments exist within the WSA boundaries.

Proposed range developments for the White Rock Range WSA include two spring developments, an associated pipeline, and one vegetative treatment. Two springs, White Rock and Wildcat Springs would be developed with springboxes, associated troughs, and fenced riparian exclosures for riparian protection. A 3-mile pipeline with two troughs would extend from Wildcat Spring to the western boundary of the WSA. Development of the springs would be accomplished with the use of a backhoe. The pipeline would be buried in Wildcat Wash with the use of a bulldozer and ripper. A two-track road would be created along the pipeline route. Maintenance for the springs and pipeline would be accomplished with the use of a vehicle where accessible.

Pinyon woodland in the western portion of the WSA has been identified for conversion by both livestock and wildlife interests to increase forage and improve habitat. Approximately 1,500 acres would be converted by chaining methods. Seeding of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native species would be accomplished at the time of chaining. As a result of the vegetation conversion, approximately 8,100 cords of dead and down fuelwood would be available for commercial and private sales. Approximately 5 miles of low grade access routes would be created in chaining the area. In addition, approximately 1,000 acres of vegetation conversion would be accomplished through a prescribed burn.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Woodland Products Management Actions

On the east side of the WSA approximately 440 acres would be harvested for both commercial fuelwood and Christmas trees. Three miles of low grade access routes would be created in this effort. Approximately 1,760 Christmas trees would be removed every 6 years and a total of 2,640 cords of fuelwood would be removed. Because of the high potential for commercial pinyon nut sales, large sales are expected based on nut crop availability.

Approximately 8,100 cords of dead and down fuelwood would be available for harvest in the western portion of the WSA as a result of the chaining described above.

Eight miles of low grade access routes would be created as a result of the chaining and cutting efforts.

Recreation Management Actions

The White Rock Range WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 7,000 acres within the west side of the White Rock Range WSA as suitable for vegetation conversion for improving habitat for mule deer, and elk. Only 2,000 acres would actually have to be converted to achieve the wildlife goals. Because of the importance for livestock as well as wildlife, 2,500 acres would be converted on the west side of the WSA through a combination of chaining and a prescribed burn. Refer to the 'Range Management Actions' section for more detailed information of the vegetation conversion.

TABLE 8

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - WHITE ROCK RANGE

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	NO WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	The impact of designation of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, elk habitat, and the pristine character of the unit.	Long term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the White Rock Range WSA would occur on approximately 1,950 acres. Most of the affected acreage would occur from vegetation removal. These disturbances would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 22,100 acres would retain their wilderness values.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 5 acres within the WSA. This exploration would be eliminated due to the lack of valid and existing claims. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. Favorability for exploration and development is considered low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.	All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Costs would be slightly higher for new project construction and one 3-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would have a negligible affect on grazing.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the White Rock Range WSA.
WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST	The harvest of 7,440 cords of fuelwood, 1,760 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.	There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.
VEGETATION MANIPULATION	Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.	There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions.

PARSNIP PEAK WSA
NV-040-206

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. I)

The Proposed Action recommends 53,560 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 34,615 acres as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 53,560 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, five mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 29 mining claims existed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Given valid and existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA. Upon approval of a plan of operations, exploration efforts targeting jasperoid bodies in the Gold Tower claims in the west-central portion of the WSA would result in a total of 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with limited access and drill pad construction. Production or development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as the result of exploration.

Exploration in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would also occur in the Gold Tower claim area resulting in a total of 3 acres of surface disturbance associated with access and drill pad construction.

The Hollinger Mine, a past producing perlite mine is located adjacent to the west boundary of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The Hollinger Mine, which has been cherrystemmed out of the WSA, is expected to resume limited production in the future.

Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the Parsnip Peak WSA is considered low due to Tertiary volcanic lithologies. Exploration or development of oil and gas resources is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA.

One exploratory oil and gas well targeting the overthrust belt is anticipated to be drilled on the southwest side of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include a 3-acre drill pad and 2 acres of disturbance for access. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres.

Seismic exploration is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA. Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration is anticipated to continue at current levels resulting in approximately 7 miles of cumulative seismic line, within the west and southwest benches of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 14 acres.

Geothermal potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Parsnip Peak WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,500 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 3,908 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the Parsnip Peak WSA include approximately 13 miles of the Bowling fence enclosing a portion of the Wilson Burn and its subsequent seeding. The fence would continue to be maintained on horseback with occasional vehicular access where necessary for major repairs. The other existing project is a spring development at Coal Burner Spring, including a storage tank and trough. A cherrystemmed route provides vehicle access for maintenance.

Proposed range developments for the suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA include a 3-mile division fence, two spring developments, and a 2-mile pipeline. The fenceline, which would separate the Mount Wilson Seeding in to two pastures would be constructed and maintained by foot or horseback.

Two water projects are proposed in the suitable portion of the WSA. Sage Hen Spring, would be developed and the spring source would be fenced. Construction and maintenance would be conducted on foot or horseback. A 2-mile pipeline extension from a proposed spring development on private land at Mud Springs would not be allowed.

A third development is proposed in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Little Mud Spring would be developed and fenced. The construction of the spring would be accomplished with heavy equipment and vehicles would be used for maintenance. A low grade access route for about .25 miles would be created.

Approximately 42,000 acres within the WSA have been identified as having potential for vegetation conversion. Only 18,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the livestock goals. Due to the thick tree cover in this area both range and wildlife interests would benefit from removal of large areas of trees. Within the entire WSA, conversions would be accomplished by several means including natural processes, mechanical methods, and prescribed burns.

A pine beetle has infested approximately 10 percent of the pinyon trees in the WSA and the mortality is expected to rise to 30 percent or more. This infestation in itself is opening up thick tree cover. Due to the accumulation of dead trees a catastrophic fire of at least 10,000 acres is expected. Following the fire, aerial seeding of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native grass, forbs, and shrubs would take place, benefiting both livestock and wildlife. Only native species would be seeded in the suitable portion of the WSA.

In addition to these natural occurrences, prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires would take place. Approximately 10,000 acres would be converted on the southwest slopes and the east side of the WSA returning the area to a more natural condition while benefiting both livestock and wildlife. Refer to the following Wildlife Management Action section for more details. Roughly 6,000 acres would be converted for livestock purposes in the nonsuitable portion on the extreme southwest portion of the WSA using either prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. This area would be seeded predominantly with crested or Siberian wheatgrass with some native grass, forbs, and shrubs, using a rangeland drill.

Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the Parsnip Peak WSA.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 53,560-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use, nor for commercial pinyon pine nut harvest.

In the nonsuitable portion a 200-acre commercial post and pole sale would occur on the west side of the WSA. Approximately 1,400 posts and poles would be removed. In the process, about 2 miles of low grade access routes would be developed.

Recreation Management Actions

The 53,560 acre suitable portion of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Fewer than 50 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

The 34,615-acre nonsuitable portion would continue to remain designated as open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

PARSNIP PEAK

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 45,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Parsnip Peak WSA for purposes of improving habitat for mule deer and elk. Only 12,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the wildlife goals. A third of the area identified for conversion potential lies along the southwest slopes of the WSA mostly in the nonsuitable portion and is considered to have the highest potential for conversion. Here, approximately 2,500 acres would actually be treated in the nonsuitable portion. Many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres would finger through the area leaving trees interspersed with open areas. Additionally, 1,500 acres in the suitable portion could be burned to restore the area to a more natural state following the guidelines in the fire management plan for the Parsnip Peak Wilderness Area.

The proposed chaining in the Bowling Wash area in the suitable portion of the WSA would not be allowed. Most of the large areas proposed for conversion in the eastern third of the WSA are within the suitable portion. Burning could be allowed on up to 7,000 acres within the suitable portion providing it is done in accordance with the fire management plan for the area. If the treated areas have insufficient capacity to reseed themselves naturally, a mixture of native seeds would be used in the suitable portions and would be seeded either aerially or by hand. In the nonsuitable portions, (approximately 1,000 acres) crested or Siberian wheatgrass would be seeded along with a mixture of native seeds. The areas chained would be seeded at the time of chaining and the burned areas would be seeded aerially or by hand. Refer to the Range Management Actions section for more information on conversions.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 88,175-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 88,175 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 34 mining claims existed within the WSA.

Given valid and existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated to occur within the Parsnip Peak WSA. Upon approval of a plan of operations, exploration efforts targeting jasperoid bodies in the Gold Tower claims in the west-central portion of the WSA would result in a total of 4 acres of surface disturbance associated with access and drill pad construction. Production or development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as the result of exploration.

The Hollinger Mine, a past producing perlite mine is located adjacent to the west boundary of the WSA. The Hollinger Mine, which has been technically cherrystemmed out of the WSA, is expected to resume limited production in the future.

Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the Parsnip Peak WSA is considered low due to Tertiary volcanic lithologies, exploration or development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place.

Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration is anticipated to continue at current levels resulting in an additional 3 miles of cumulative seismic line, within the west and southwest benches of the WSA. These lines would be accomplished by foot and would result in no surface disturbance. Seismic exploration is not anticipated to occur on the east side of the WSA.

Geothermal potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Parsnip Peak WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 4,408 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the Parsnip Peak WSA include approximately 13 miles of the Bowling fence enclosing a portion of the Wilson Burn and its subsequent seeding. The fence would continue to be maintained on horseback with occasional vehicular access where necessary for major repairs. The other existing project is a spring development at Coal Burner Spring, including a storage tank and trough. A cherrystemmed route provides vehicle access for maintenance.

Proposed range developments for the Parsnip Peak WSA include a 3-mile division fence, two spring developments, and a 2-mile pipeline. The fenceline, which would separate the Mount Wilson Seeding in to two pastures would be constructed and maintained by foot or horseback.

Two springs would be developed with the spring sources fenced at Sage Hen and Little Mud Springs. Construction and maintenance of the Sage Hen facility would be done on foot or horseback. A backhoe could be walked into Little Mud Spring providing no road construction would be needed. Maintenance would take place on foot or horseback. A 2-mile pipeline extension from a proposed spring development on private land at Mud Springs would not be allowed.

Approximately 42,000 acres within the WSA has been identified as having potential for vegetation conversion. Only 18,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the livestock goals. Due to the thick tree cover in this area both range and wildlife interests would benefit from removal of large areas of trees. Within the entire WSA, conversions would be accomplished by several means including natural processes and prescribed burns.

A pine beetle has infested approximately 10 percent of the pinyon trees in the WSA and the mortality is expected to rise to 30 percent or more. This infestation in itself is opening up thick tree cover. Due to the accumulation of dead trees a catastrophic fire of at least 10,000 acres is expected. Following the fire, aerial seeding of native grass, forbs, and shrubs would take place.

In addition to these natural occurrences, prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires would take place in the large sloping southwest portion of the WSA and along fingerlike drainages through the east side. These prescribed burns or limited suppression burns would total 12,000 acres.

Prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the Parsnip Peak WSA. Refer to the Wildlife Management Actions section for more information.

The 6,000 acre sagebrush conversion in the extreme southwest corner of the WSA could be allowed although only native species would be seeded using nonmechanical methods.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The Parsnip Peak WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use, nor for commercial pinyon nut harvest.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Parsnip Peak WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. approximately 200 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads the 25 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

PARSNIP PEAK

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 45,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Parsnip Peak WSA for purposes of improving habitat for mule deer and elk. Only 12,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the wildlife goals. Approximately 12,000 acres within the WSA would be converted using prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. Pinyon and juniper encroachment and suppression of wildfires in the past have created an unnaturally thick tree cover and conversion is necessary to restore it to a more natural state while improving habitat for both wildlife and livestock. Specifics for habitat improvement using fire would have to be incorporated into the fire management plan for Parsnip Peak as part of the area's wilderness management plan. Any seeding needed would be done with a mixture of native species and would be either hand or aerially applied.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 34,310 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 53,865 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 53,560 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, three mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 31 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration of mineral resource development is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA.

Some exploration is anticipated to take place in the Gold Tower claim area in the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Exploration efforts targeting jasperoid bodies would result in a total of 7 acres of surface disturbance associated with 2 miles (4 acres) of access and drill pad construction. Production or development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as the result of exploration.

The Hollinger Mine, a past producing perlite mine is located adjacent to the west boundary of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. The Hollinger Mine, which has been cherrystemmed out of the WSA, is expected to resume limited production in the future.

PARSNIP PEAK

Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the WSA is considered low due to Tertiary volcanic lithologies. Exploration or development of oil and gas resources is not anticipated to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA.

One exploratory oil and gas well targeting the overthrust belt is anticipated to be drilled on the southwest side of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include a 3-acre drill pad and 2 acres of disturbance for access. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres.

Seismic exploration is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA. Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration is anticipated to continue at current levels resulting in approximately 7 miles of cumulative seismic line, within the west and southwest benches of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Total surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks from seismic exploration would be 14 acres.

Geothermal potential for the WSA is considered low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Parsnip Peak WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 750 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 3,658 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Livestock (cattle) grazing within the Parsnip Peak WSA would continue at approximately current levels. These levels may vary slightly based on resource monitoring and implementation of the Wilson Creek Allotment Management Plan.

Existing range developments within the nonsuitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA include approximately 13 miles of the Bowling fence enclosing a portion of the Wilson Burn and its subsequent seeding. The entire fence is in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA and current maintenance practices would continue. The only existing project within the suitable portion is a spring development at Coal Burner Spring, including a storage tank and trough. A cherrystemmed route provides vehicle access for maintenance.

Proposed range developments for the Parsnip Peak WSA are all within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA and include a 3-mile division fence, three spring developments, and a 2-mile pipeline. The fenceline, which would separate the Wilson Seeding in to two pastures would be constructed partially by workers on foot or horseback due to the rugged nature of the country, and where accessible, in vehicles. Two springs, Sage Hen and Mud

Springs are proposed to be developed with the spring source fenced. A 2-mile pipeline would run from Mud Spring east down Mud Spring Wash and Buck Wash. Although Mud Spring is located on private property the pipeline would run through the WSA on public land. Due to the rugged terrain at Sage Hen Spring, the development would be done and maintained by workers on foot or horseback. A primitive track to Mud Springs would be upgraded and heavy equipment used to put in the 2-mile pipeline. Maintenance would be done using vehicles.

A third spring, Little Mud, would be developed and fenced. The construction and maintenance of this spring would be accomplished with heavy equipment and vehicles. A low grade access route for about .25 miles would be created.

Approximately 42,000 acres within the WSA have been identified as having potential for vegetation conversions although only 18,000 acres would be necessary to achieve the livestock goals. Due to the thick tree cover in this area both range and wildlife interests would benefit from removal of large areas of trees. Within the entire WSA, conversions would be accomplished by several means including natural processes, mechanical methods, and prescribed fires.

A pine beetle has infested approximately 10 percent of the pinyon trees in the WSA and the mortality is expected to rise to 30 percent or more. This infestation in itself is opening up thick tree cover. Due to the accumulation of dead trees a catastrophic fire of at least 10,000 acres is expected. Following the fire, aerial seeding of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native grass, forbs, and shrubs would take place, benefiting both livestock and wildlife. Only native species would be seeded in the suitable portion of the WSA.

In addition to these natural occurrences, chaining, prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires would take place. Approximately 10,000 acres would be converted on the southwest slopes and the east side of the WSA, benefiting both livestock and wildlife. Refer to the following Wildlife Management Action section for more details. Roughly 6,000 acres would be converted for livestock purposes on the extreme southwest portion of the WSA using either prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. This area would be seeded predominantly with crested or Siberian wheatgrass with some native grass, forbs, and shrubs, using a rangeland drill.

Any prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires within the suitable portion of the WSA would have to adhere to the specifics outlined in the fire management plan as part of the wilderness management plan for the Parsnip Peak WSA.

Woodland Products Management Actions

The 34,310-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not be designated as a cutting area for private or commercial use, nor for commercial pinyon pine nut harvest.

PARSNIP PEAK

In the nonsuitable portion, a 200-acre commercial post and pole sale would occur on the west side of the WSA. Approximately 1,400 posts and poles would be removed. In the central portion of the WSA a 40 acre area would be designated for commercial fuelwood sale and about 240 cords of fuelwood would be removed. In the process, about 2 miles of low grade access routes would be created during the post and pole sale and about .5 miles would be created during the fuelwood sale. Commercial pinyon pine nut sales would take place in accessible areas of the WSA, based on nut crop availability.

Recreation Management Actions

The 34,310-acre suitable portion of the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Fewer than 25 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 2 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

The 53,865 acre nonsuitable area would continue to remain designated as open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 45,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Parsnip Peak WSA for purposes of improving habitat for mule deer and elk. Only 12,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the wildlife goals. A third of the area identified for conversion potential lies along the southwest slopes of the WSA virtually all in the nonsuitable area and is considered the highest priority. Here, approximately 4,000 acres would actually be treated. Many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres would finger through the area leaving trees interspersed with open areas.

A 1,000-acre chaining would also occur in the Bowling Wash area in the nonsuitable northeast portion of the WSA. An additional 1,600 acres in the nonsuitable portion would be prescribed burned along the northeastern part of the WSA again in small scattered areas. If the areas have insufficient capacity to reseed themselves naturally, seeding would be done using a mixture of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Areas chained would be seeded during the chaining process. Most of the areas that are prescribed burned would be seeded aerially or by hand.

In the suitable portion of the WSA about 5,400 acres are tentatively identified for burning either by prescribed fire or limited suppression as long as they are in conformance with the fire management plan for the Parsnip Peak WSA. If seeding is required only native species would be used. Refer to the Range Management Actions section for more detail on conversions.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 88,175-acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), the entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would not be required prior to development. As of 1983, a total of 34 mining claims existed within the WSA.

A small exploratory drilling program targeting disseminated gold is anticipated to occur in the Gold Tower claim area in the west-central portion of the WSA. A total of 7 acres of surface disturbance would result from 2 miles of access and drill pad construction. Production or development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as a result of exploration.

The Hollinger Mine, a past producing perlite mine is located adjacent to the west boundary of the WSA. The Hollinger Mine, which has been cherrystemmed out of the WSA, is expected to resume limited production in the future.

Energy Management Actions

Potential for oil and gas discovery within the WSA is considered low due to Tertiary volcanic lithologies. One exploratory oil and gas well targeting the overthrust belt is anticipated to be drilled on the southwest side of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include a 3-acre drill pad and 2 acres of disturbance for access. Total surface disturbance would be 5 acres.

Based on current exploration trends, seismic exploration is anticipated to continue at current levels resulting in approximately 7 miles of cumulative seismic line within the west and southwest benches of the WSA. Total surface disturbance from seismic exploration in the form of visible linear tracks, would be 14 acres. No seismic exploration is anticipated on the east side of the WSA.

Geothermal potential for the WSA is low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle) are grazed in one allotment within the Parsnip Peak WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 4,408 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

PARSNIP PEAK

Existing range developments within the Parsnip Peak WSA include approximately 13 miles of the Bowling fence enclosing a portion of the Wilson Burn and its subsequent seeding. The other existing project is a spring development at Coal Burner Spring, including a storage tank and trough. Current maintenance would continue on both projects.

Proposed range developments for the Parsnip Peak WSA include a 3-mile division fence, three spring developments, a 2-mile pipeline. The fenceline, which would separate the Mount Wilson Seeding in to two pastures would be constructed partially by workers on foot or horseback due to the rugged nature of the country and where accessible, using vehicles. Two springs, Sage Hen and Mud Springs are proposed to be developed with the spring source fenced. A 2-mile pipeline would run from Mud Spring east down Mud Spring Wash and Buck Wash. Although Mud Spring is located on private property the pipeline would run through the WSA on public land. Due to the rugged terrain at Sage Hen Spring, the development would be done and maintained by workers on foot or horseback. A primitive track to Mud Springs would be upgraded and heavy equipment used to put in the 2-mile pipeline. Maintenance would be done using vehicles.

A third spring, Little Mud, would be developed and fenced. The construction and maintenance of this spring would be accomplished with heavy equipment and vehicles. A low grade access route for about .25 miles would be created.

Approximately conversions for 42,000 acres within the WSA have been identified as having potential for vegetation conversion although only 18,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the livestock goals. Due to the thick tree cover in this area both range and wildlife interests would benefit from removal of large areas of trees. Within the WSA, conversions would be accomplished by several means including natural processes, mechanical methods, and prescribed burns.

A pine beetle has infested approximately 10 percent of the pinyon trees in the WSA and the mortality is expected to rise to 30 percent or more. This infestation in itself is opening up thick tree cover. Due to the accumulation of dead trees a catastrophic fire of at least 10,000 acres is expected. Following the fire, aerial seeding of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native grass, forbs, and shrubs would take place, benefiting both livestock and wildlife.

In addition to these natural occurrences, chaining, prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires would take place. Approximately 10,000 acres would be converted on the southwest slopes and the east side of the WSA, benefiting both livestock and wildlife. Refer to the following Wildlife Management Action section for more details. Roughly 6,000 acres would be converted for livestock purposes on the extreme southwest portion of the WSA using either prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. This area would be seeded predominantly with crested or Siberian wheatgrass with some native grass, forbs, and shrubs, using a rangeland drill.

Woodland Products Management Actions

A 200-acre commercial post and pole sale would occur on the west side of the WSA. Approximately 1,400 posts and poles would be removed from the area. In the central portion of the WSA an 80-acre area would be designated for commercial fuelwood sales and about 480 cords of fuelwood would be removed. In the process, 2 miles of low grade routes would be constructed at each of the designated sale areas. Salvage cutting of burned trees in the Wilson Burn in the northern portion of the WSA would continue until this resource is gone.

In addition, commercial sales would take place where practical before prescribed burns occur. Refer to the Range Management Actions section for more detail.

Commercial pinyon pine nut sales would take place in accessible areas of the WSA, based on nut crop availability.

Recreation Management Actions

The Parsnip Peak WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan identified approximately 45,000 acres as suitable for vegetation conversion within the Parsnip Peak WSA for the purposes of improving habitat for mule deer and elk. Only 12,000 acres would actually have to be treated to achieve the wildlife goals. A third of the area identified for conversion potential lies along the southwest slopes of the WSA and is considered the highest priority. Here, approximately 4,000 acres would actually be treated. Many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres would finger through the area leaving trees interspersed with open areas.

A 1,000-acre chaining would also occur in the Bowling Wash area in the northeast portion of the WSA. An additional 7,000 acres would be prescribed burned along the eastern third of the WSA again in small scattered areas. If the area has insufficient capacity to reseed itself naturally, seeding would be done using a mixture of crested or Siberian wheatgrass and native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Any seeding required on areas to be chained would be done during the chaining operation. Most of the areas that are prescribed burned would be seeded aerially or by hand. Refer to the Range Management Actions section for more details on conversions.

TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - PARSNIP PEAK

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	The result of designating the suitable portion of the USA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the USA would occur on approximately 8,200 acres. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and the eastern slopes of the USA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 26,400 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.	The result of designation of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa pine and Gambel oak stands.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the USA. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 5 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the USA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.	Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the USA. This includes 3,350 acres of perlite reserves. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 4 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the USA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the USA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the USA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire USA. Development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the USA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the USA.	All lands within the USA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 7 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the USA and development is not expected to take place.
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.	There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.
WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST	The harvest of 480 cord of fuelwood, and commercial sales of piñon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the USA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the USA could satisfy demand.	The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, 1,400 posts and poles, and commercial sales of piñon pine nuts within the USA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the USA could satisfy demand.
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portions of the USA or to other public lands would be negligible.	Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
VEGETATION MANIPULATION	Seventeen hundred and fifty acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the USA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.	A 6,000-acre seeding and 3,000 acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the USA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 2	NO WILDERNESS	IMPACT TOPIC
<p>The result of wilderness designation for the suitable portion of the WSA would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 8,870 acres in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and eastern slopes of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 45,000 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.</p>	<p>Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 9,310 acres on the northern and southwestern portions of the WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would also be reduced. The highly scenic values within the WSA would not be impaired. The stands of ponderosa pine and Gambel's oak, and the potential National Register district would not be affected by a no wilderness designation.</p>	WILDERNESS VALUES
<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.</p>	EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES
<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.</p>	EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES
<p>There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance or construction.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.</p>	GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION
<p>The harvest of 240 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.</p>	WOODLAND PRODUCTS HARVEST
<p>Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.</p>	<p>There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.</p>	RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE
<p>Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. The proposed chainings and seedlings within the nonsuitable portion would occur. There would be no impacts on vegetation manipulation.</p>	<p>There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.</p>	VEGETATION MANIPULATION

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS WSA NV-040-242

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. D)

The Proposed Action recommends 26,587 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 21,046 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 26,587 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the Mining and Mineral Leasing Laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 32 mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 36 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The Freiburg Mining District is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Worthington Mountains WSA. Approximately 500 acres of the mining district are within the WSA boundary. Limited production of silver, zinc, lead, and gold has occurred in the Freiburg area in the past.

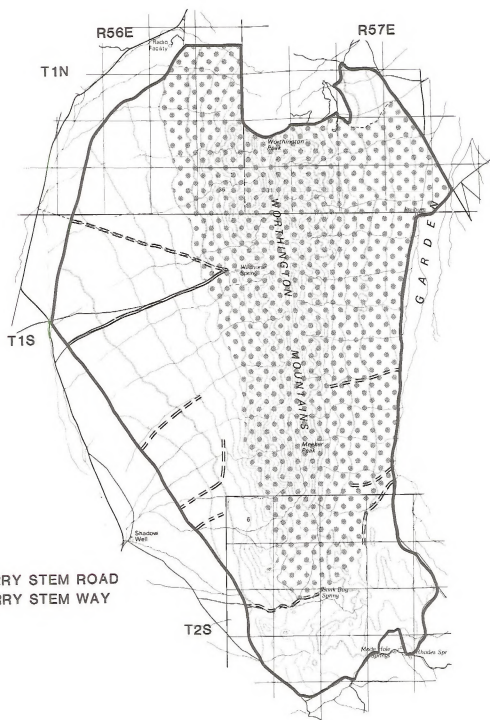
Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA. A total of 3 acres of surface disturbance involving minimal access construction and drill pads would occur in the southern part of the mining district within the WSA boundary. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures will be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Development and production of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur either within the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 1 mile of vibroseis line on the east bench of the suitable portion of the WSA. Vibroseis activities would take place on existing cherrystemmed roads or ways resulting in no additional surface disturbance. Within the unsuitable portion, seismic exploration would total 7 miles of vibroseis line on the west bench of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 14 acres.



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Geothermal resource favorability is considered low within the WSA and development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in three allotments within the Worthington Mountains WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 362 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 723 AUM's within the unsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include; 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enters the WSA in the north from a development outside the area. All of these projects are accessible by vehicle for maintenance either along existing roads or cross-country over gently sloping terrain.

A 1.5-mile section of pipeline would extend into the unsuitable portion of the WSA from Mode Hole Spring. Two new pipelines would be constructed from the Wild Horse Spring which is located in the suitable portion of the WSA. The new pipelines would lay next to the old ones within already disturbed areas. Approximately 1 mile of the total 7 miles of pipeline would be within the suitable part of the WSA. About a half-mile of pipeline would be built for Stink Bug Spring through the suitable portion of the WSA. The remaining 1 mile would be located in the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Disturbance from the pipeline would be limited to the wash and existing road berm. The proposed 2-mile pasture fence and 1 mile of pipeline from Freiburg Well along the east side of the WSA would not be allowed.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Commercial and private woodland product harvest would not be allowed in the suitable portion. Due to the remote, steep, and inaccessible nature of the WSA no forestry actions would take place regardless of wilderness designation.

Recreation Management Actions

The 26,587 acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be designated as closed to recreation ORV use. Fewer than 25 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicle use would continue along the boundary roads and 5 miles of cherrystemmed routes along the east side of the WSA. The 21,046 acre unsuitable portion would continue to be designated as open to recreational ORV use.

Management of Leviathan Cave would be incorporated into the wilderness management plan for the Worthington Mountains.

Wildlife Management Actions

The existing bighorn sheep population, using the Worthington Mountains, would be augmented by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located within the suitable part of the WSA along the ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Buried 1,600-gallon tanks would store the run-off from the slickrock. Small drinkers would be located near each of the tanks. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzlers would be used. These guzzlers are 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath their dome-shaped cover. They would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Realty Management Actions

Military communication facilities would not be constructed on either Meeker or Worthington Peaks.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 47,633-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

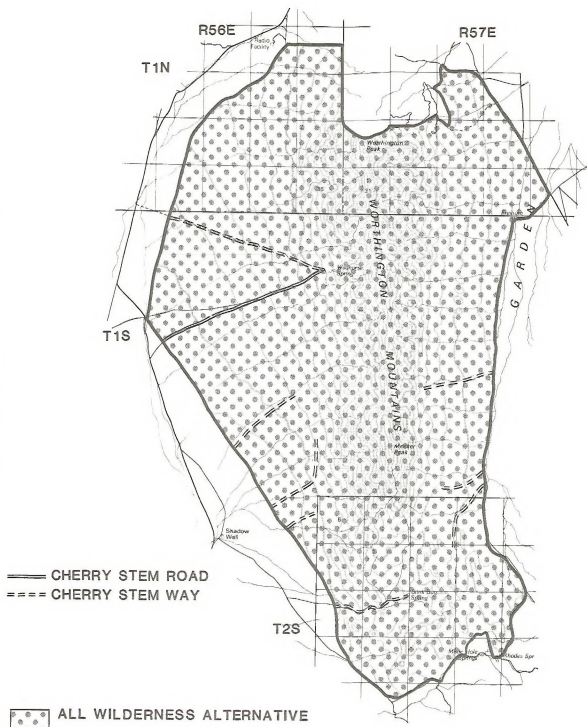
Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 47,633 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 68 mining claims existed within the WSA.

The Freiburg Mining District is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Worthington Mountains WSA. Approximately 500 acres of the mining district are within the WSA boundary. Limited production of silver, zinc, lead, and gold has occurred in the Freiburg area in the past.

Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated to occur within the WSA. A total of 3 acres of surface disturbance involving minimal access construction and drill pads would occur in the southern part of the mining district within the WSA boundary. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures will be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Development and production of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur in the WSA as a result of exploration.



ALTERNATIVES
 NV-040-242 WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of oil and gas is not anticipated to occur within the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 6 miles of vibroseis line on the west bench and 1 mile of vibroseis line on the east bench of the WSA. Under this alternative, seismic lines would be restricted to existing cherrystemmed routes resulting in no surface disturbance.

Geothermal resource favorability is considered low within the WSA and development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in three allotments within the Worthington Mountains WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,085 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include; 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enters the WSA in the north from a development outside the area. All of these projects are accessible by vehicle for maintenance either along existing roads or cross-country over gently sloping terrain.

Two pipelines would be built in the southern portion of the WSA. About 1.5 miles of pipeline would be constructed from Stink Bug Spring heading west. Disturbance from the pipeline would be limited to the wash and existing road berm. Another 1.5 mile stretch of pipeline would be constructed from Mode Hole Spring only if it could feasibly follow the berm of the boundary road. Two new pipelines would be constructed from the Wild Horse Spring located on the west side of the WSA. The new pipelines would closely parallel the old pipelines in previously disturbed areas, for 4.5 miles. An additional 2.5 mile extension from the terminus of the old pipelines would also be built in previously disturbed areas along an existing cherrystemmed route. The proposed 2-mile pasture fence and the 1 mile of pipeline from Freiburg Well along the east side of the WSA would not be allowed.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Commercial and private woodland product harvest would not be allowed in the suitable portion. Due to the remote, steep, and inaccessible nature of the WSA, no forestry actions would take place regardless of wilderness designation.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 150 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicle use would continue along the boundary roads and the 14 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Wildlife Management Actions

The existing bighorn sheep population, using the Worthington Mountains, would be augmented by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the WSA's ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Buried 1,600-gallon tanks would store the run-off from the slickrock. Small drinkers would be located near each of the tanks. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzlers would be used. These guzzlers are 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath their dome-shaped cover. They would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Realty Management Actions

Military communication facilities would not be constructed on either Meeker or Worthington Peaks.

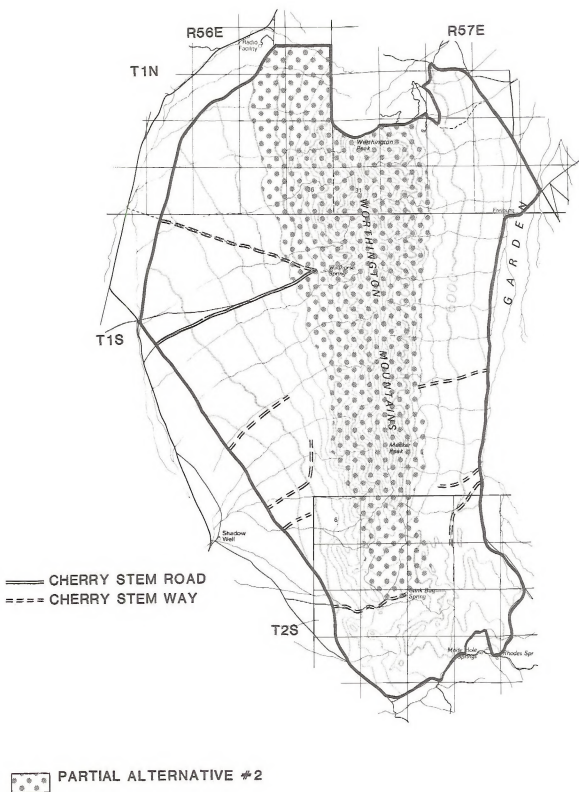
PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 17,500 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 30,133 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 17,500 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the Mining and Mineral Leasing Laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 32 mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 36 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The Freiburg Mining District is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Worthington Mountains WSA. Approximately 500 acres of the mining district are within the WSA boundary. Limited production of silver, zinc, lead, and gold has occurred in the Freiburg area in the past.



ALTERNATIVES
 NV-040-242 WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Given valid existing claims prior to designation, some exploration is anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA. A total of 3 acres of surface disturbance involving minimal access construction and drill pads would occur in the southern part of the mining district within the WSA boundary. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures will be adopted to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource.

Also associated with the exploration program, approximately 1 mile of access construction totalling 2 acres of surface disturbance would occur within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Development and production of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur either within the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of oil and gas is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 7 miles of vibroseis line on the west bench and 3 miles of vibroseis line on the east bench of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 20 acres. Seismic exploration would not occur on the suitable portion of the WSA.

Geothermal resource favorability is considered low within the WSA and development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in three allotments within the Worthington Mountains WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 55 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 1,030 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include; 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enters the WSA in the north from a development outside the area. All of these projects are accessible by vehicle for maintenance either along existing roads or cross-country over gently sloping terrain.

Several new projects are proposed to be constructed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. A 1-mile pipeline would be constructed from Freiburg Well and 1.5 miles of pipeline would extend into the WSA from Mode Hole Spring. A pasture fence would extend into the nonsuitable portion of the WSA for about 1.5 miles. The remaining .5 miles which would extend into the suitable portion would not be allowed. A two-track access route would be created in the process of fence construction and maintenance. Two new pipelines would be constructed from the Wild Horse Spring which is located within the suitable portion of the WSA. The new pipelines would lay next to the old ones within already disturbed areas. Approximately 1 mile of the total seven miles of pipeline would be within the suitable portion. About .5 miles of pipeline would be built from Stink Bug Spring through the suitable portion of the WSA. The remaining 1 mile would be located in the nonsuitable portion. Disturbance from the pipeline would be limited to the wash and road berm.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Due to the remote, steep, and inaccessible nature of the WSA, no forestry actions would take place.

Recreation Management Actions

The 17,500-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be designated as closed to recreational ORV use. Due to the extremely rugged nature of the suitable portion, no recreational ORV use would be displaced. The remaining 30,133 acres in the nonsuitable portion would remain open to recreational ORV use.

Management of Leviathan Cave would be incorporated into the wilderness management plan for the Worthington Mountains.

Wildlife Management Actions

The existing bighorn sheep population, using the Worthington Mountains, would be augmented by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located within the suitable part of the WSA along the ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Buried 1,600-gallon tanks would store the run-off from the slickrock. Small drinkers would be located near each of the tanks. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzlers would be used. These guzzlers are 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath their dome-shaped cover. They would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Realty Management Actions

Military communication facilities would not be constructed on either Meeker or Worthington Peaks.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 3 recommends 5,255 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 42,408 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 5,255 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the Mining and Mineral Leasing Laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, no mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 68 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The Freiburg Mining District is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Worthington Mountains WSA. Approximately 500 acres of the mining district are within the WSA boundary. Limited production of silver, zinc, lead, and gold has occurred in the Freiburg area in the past.

Exploration or development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA.

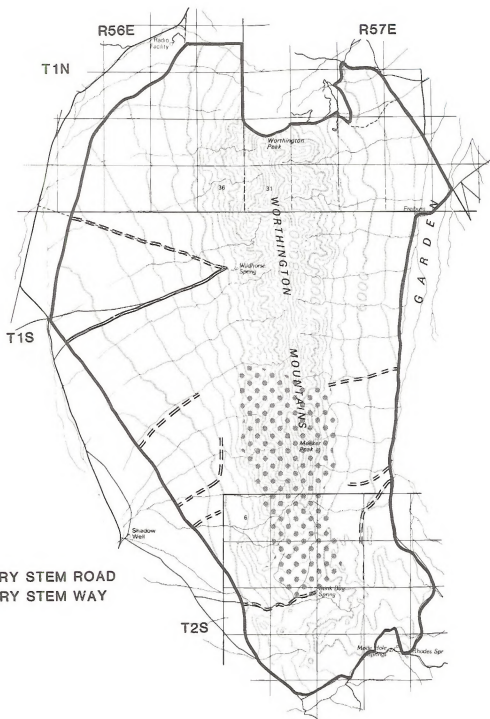
Exploration in the unsuitable portion would take place on the western flank of Worthington Peak and within the Freiburg Mining District. A total of 8 acres of surface disturbance would result from a limited exploration program in the southern portion of the mining district. Surface disturbance would be primarily associated with 2 miles of access construction and subsequent drilling and trenching.

An exploration program on the west side of the unsuitable portion of the WSA would result in additional 6 acres of surface disturbance associated with 3 miles of access and drill pad construction. Development or production of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as a result of exploration in the unsuitable portion.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 7 miles of vibroseis line on the west bench and 3 miles of vibroseis line on the east bench of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 20 acres. Seismic exploration would not occur on suitable portion of the WSA.



ALTERNATIVES
NV-040-242 WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Geothermal resource favorability is considered low within the WSA and development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in three allotments within the Worthington Mountains WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 5 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 1,080 AUM's within the unsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include; 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enters the WSA in the north from a development outside the area. All of these projects are accessible by vehicle for maintenance either along existing roads or cross-country over gently sloping terrain.

Several new projects are proposed to be constructed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA. New pipelines from Wild Horse Spring would be installed following the old pipelines for 4.5 miles. An additional 2.5 mile extension from the terminus of one of the old pipelines would be built. A 1-mile pipeline would be constructed from Freiburg Well, and 1.5 miles of pipeline would extend into the WSA from Mode Hole Spring. A pasture fence would extend into the WSA for approximately 2 miles. A two-track access route would be created in the process of fence construction and maintenance. All of these projects would have vehicle access. About a .5 miles of pipeline would be built from Stink Bug Spring through the suitable portion of the WSA. The remaining 1 mile would be located in the unsuitable portion. Disturbance from the pipeline would be confined to the wash and road berm.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Due to the remote, steep, and inaccessible nature of the WSA, no forestry actions would take place.

Recreation Management Actions

The 5,225-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be designated as closed to recreational ORV use. Due to the extraordinarily rugged nature of the suitable portion, no recreation ORV use would be displaced. The remaining 42,408 acres in the unsuitable portion would continue to be designated as open to recreational ORV use.

Management of Leviathan Cave would be incorporated into the wilderness management plan for the Worthington Mountains.

Wildlife Management Actions

The existing bighorn sheep population, using the Worthington Mountains, would be augmented by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. Sheep would use both the suitable and unsuitable portions of the mountain range.

One bighorn sheep guzzler would be located along the WSA's ridgeline within the suitable portion of the WSA. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzler would utilize a natural slickrock apron. A buried 1,600-gallon tank would store the run-off from the slickrock. A small drinker would be located near the tank. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, a self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzler would be used. The guzzler is 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath its dome-shaped cover. It would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Two bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart in the unsuitable portion of the WSA. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found a 1,300 square foot apron of polyethylene would be laid on the ground. A painted or partially buried 3,000 gallon storage tank (or two smaller tanks) would be associated with each guzzler as well as a small drinker.

Realty Management Actions

A military communication facility would be placed on Worthington Peak in the unsuitable portion of the WSA. The small solar facility would be helicoptered in and a 100-foot by 100-foot area would be disturbed. A similar facility would not be allowed on Meeker Peak located in the suitable portion of the WSA.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 47,633-acre area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative (No Wilderness), the entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. As of 1983, a total of 68 mining claims existed within the WSA.

The Freiburg Mining District is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Worthington Mountains WSA. Approximately 500 acres of the mining district are within the WSA boundary. Limited production of silver, zinc, lead, and gold has occurred in the Freiburg area in the past.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Exploration within the WSA would take place on the western flank of Worthington Peak and within the Freiburg Mining District. A total of 8 acres of surface disturbance would result from a limited exploration program in the southern portion of the mining district. Surface disturbance would be primarily associated with 2 miles of access construction and subsequent drilling and trenching.

An exploration program on the west side of the WSA would result in an additional 6 acres of surface disturbance associated with 3 miles of access and drill pad construction. Development or production of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur as a result of exploration.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas resource potential for the Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to be low. Exploration or development of energy resources is not anticipated to occur within the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 7 miles of vibroseis line on the west bench and 3 miles of vibroseis line on the east bench of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks would total 20 acres.

Geothermal resource favorability is considered low within the WSA and development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in three allotments within the Worthington Mountains WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,085 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA include; 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enters the WSA in the north from a development outside the area. All of these projects are accessible by vehicle for maintenance either along existing roads or cross-country over gently sloping terrain.

Several new projects are proposed to be constructed within the WSA. New pipelines from Wild Horse Spring would be installed following the old pipelines for 4.5 miles. An additional 2.5 mile extension from the terminus of one of the old pipelines would be built. A 1.5 mile section of pipeline within the WSA would be built extending west from Stink Bug Spring roughly following the existing road. A 1-mile pipeline would be constructed from Freiburg Well, and 1.5 miles of pipeline would extend into the WSA from Mode

Hole Spring. A pasture fence would extend into the WSA for approximately 2 miles. A two-track access route would be created in the process of fence construction and maintenance. All of these projects would have vehicle access.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Due to the remote, steep, and inaccessible nature of the WSA, no forestry actions would take place.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire Worthington Mountains WSA would continue to remain designated as open to recreation ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

A cave management plan would be prepared for Leviathan Cave. No surface disturbing activities are anticipated as a result of implementation of this plan. Under this alternative the Schell MFP states that the area surrounding Leviathan Cave would be nominated as an area of critical environmental concern. This designation would provide protection for the unique geologic formations found in the cave.

Wildlife Management Actions

The existing bighorn sheep population, using the Worthington Mountains, would be augmented by the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the WSA's ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found a 1,300 square foot apron of polyethylene would be laid on the ground. A painted or partially buried 3,000 gallon storage tank (or two smaller tanks) would be associated with each guzzler as well as a small drinker.

Realty Management Actions

Military communication facilities would be placed on the top of Meeker and Worthington Peaks. The small solar facility would be helicoptered in and a 100-foot by 100-foot area would be disturbed.

TABLE 10

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	<p>Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.</p> <p>Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the nonsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 20 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the western bench.</p>	<p>Designation of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.</p>
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.</p>
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Of the 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur within the suitable portion without wilderness designation, 2 of the miles would be foregone and one would be restricted to existing roads or ways. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Of the 10 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation, 3 of these would be foregone and 7 would be limited to existing roads. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place.</p>
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	<p>There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.</p>
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	<p>Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.</p>	<p>Recreational ORV use of 150 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.</p>

PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 2	PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 3	NO WILDERNESS
<p>Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.</p> <p>Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the nonsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area especially on the western bench. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.</p> <p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p> <p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p> <p>There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities. The absence of .5 miles of pasture fence in the suitable portion of the WSA would result in some cattle drift which would affect the management of the pasture system.</p> <p>There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.</p>	<p>Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres in the nonsuitable portion. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished. Designation of the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would preserve the outstanding wilderness values that are present, including Leviathan Cave.</p> <p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion is identified as having low favorability for mineral resources and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p> <p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p> <p>There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities.</p> <p>There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.</p>	<p>Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.</p> <p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.</p> <p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.</p> <p>There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.</p> <p>There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.</p>

WEEPAH SPRING WSA NV-040-246

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. I)

The Proposed Action recommends 50,499 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 10,638 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 50,499 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 225 mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 174 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The northern and western portions of the WSA, and to a lesser extent, the eastern portion of the WSA contain favorable lithologies for the discovery of disseminated gold deposits. Given valid existing claims at the time of designation, some exploration and development targeting disseminated gold would occur totalling 105 acres of surface disturbance in the suitable portion and 157 acres in the unsuitable portion. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures would be adopted to protect the wilderness resource within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration activities within the suitable portion of the WSA would be done with drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles using existing access and driving cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from this exploration in the western portion of the WSA would total 1 acre within the suitable portion of the WSA. Additionally, 4 acres would be disturbed in the unsuitable portion from road and drill pad construction.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development. Development of the 236-acre heap leach operation would involve 79 acres of surface disturbance within the suitable portion of the WSA and 157 acres of surface disturbance within the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance within the suitable portion would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump and 1 mile of new road construction disturbing 7 acres. Within the unsuitable portion, disturbance would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump; 2 miles of road upgrading disturbing 10 acres and 75 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities.

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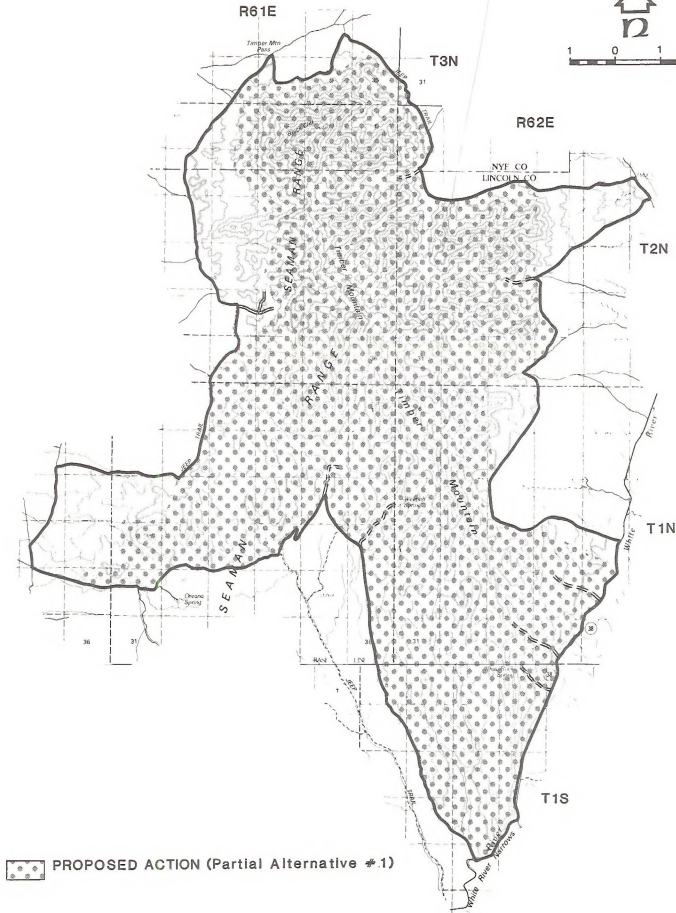
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 PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Alternative #1)

 CHERRY STEM ROAD

 CHERRY STEM WAY

NV-040-246 WEEPAH SPRING

WEEPAH SPRING

Exploration activities totalling 4 acres in the eastern portion of the suitable part of the WSA would involve minimal access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20-acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .25-mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Due to unfavorable lithologies, additional mineral development is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or unsuitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low, however, it is anticipated that one wildcat exploratory well would be drilled on the western bench of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance from oil and gas exploration would total approximately 5 acres, involving 3 acres for a well pad cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil and 2 acres for access. Oil and gas development is not anticipated to take place within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling one mile of vibroseis line on the west bench of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of short segments of visible linear tracks would total 2 acres. Seismic exploration is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Geothermal resource potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in six allotments within the Weepah Spring WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,200 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 235 AUM's within the unsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA are all in the suitable portion and consist of an old spring development at Weepah Spring with 1.25 miles of associated pipeline along a cherrystemmed road, approximately .25 miles of fence near Oreana Canyon, and a spring development at White Rock Spring with one mile of associated pipeline along a cherrystemmed road.

Within the suitable portion of the WSA, Weepah Spring would be redeveloped and 1.25 miles of new pipeline would be laid down next to the old pipeline along the existing cherrystemmed road. No additional pipeline would be built. Keno Spring would be developed by hand. No heavy equipment would be used and no pipelines or access routes would be constructed. A short tie-off fence, less than .25 miles would be constructed in the northeast corner of the WSA.

The southern tie off fence totalling less than .5 miles would not be constructed, nor would the 8-mile long pasture fence through the center of the WSA.

In the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, 7 miles of fence would be constructed around a 1,200-acre vegetation conversion. The area would be prescribed burned and crested or Siberian wheatgrass would be seeded with a rangeland drill.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Commercial or private sales of woodland products would not be allowed within the 50,499-acre suitable portion of the WSA. Due to difficult access and rugged terrain, no sales would be expected to occur even without wilderness designation.

Recreation Management Actions

The 50,499-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be designated closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 125 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 10,638-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain designated as open to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

Wildlife Management Actions

A 1-acre area around Weepah Spring would be fenced to protect the riparian values. A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the WSA's southern ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Buried 1,600-gallon tanks would store the run-off from the slickrock. Small drinkers would be located near each of the tanks. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzlers would be used. These guzzlers are 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath their dome-shaped cover. They would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Realty Management Actions

No communication facilities would be permitted within the suitable portion of the WSA. It is not anticipated that any facilities would be constructed in the nonsuitable portion.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The All Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 61,137-acre area as suitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 61,137 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, a total of 399 mining claims existed within the WSA.

The northern and western portions of the WSA, and to a lesser extent, the eastern portion of the WSA contain favorable lithologies for the discovery of disseminated gold deposits. Given valid existing claims at the time of designation, some exploration and development targeting disseminated gold would occur totalling 187 acres of surface disturbance. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures would be adopted to protect the wilderness resource.

On the lower more accessible slopes of the WSA's west bench, drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles could be used on existing access and cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from exploration in this area would total 2 acres.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development.

Development of the 236-acre heap leach operation would involve only 161 acres of surface disturbance within the WSA boundary. Surface disturbance would include two 30-acre open pits with 84 acres of associated waste dumps; 2 miles of major road upgrading, and 1 mile of new road construction totalling 17 acres. Leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities totalling 75 acres would be located outside of the WSA boundary.



1 0 1 2 Miles

R61E

T3N

R62E

T2N

T1N

T1S

NVI CO
LINCOLN CO

SEAMAN

SEAMAN RANGE

Flint

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

White River

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

CHERRY STEM ROAD

CHERRY STEM WAY

WEEPAH SPRING

Exploration activities totalling 4 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve limited access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20 acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .5-mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Due to unfavorable lithologies, additional precious mineral development is not anticipated to take place within the Weepah Springs WSA.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low and development of energy resources is not anticipated.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 2 mile of vibroseis line on the west bench of the WSA. These lines would be accomplished by foot and would result in no surface disturbance.

Geothermal resource potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in six allotments within the Weepah Spring WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,435 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA consist of an old spring development at Weepah Spring with an associated 1.25 miles of pipeline, approximately .25 miles of fence near Oreana Canyon, and a spring development at White Rock Spring with one mile of associated pipeline along a cherrystemmed road.

Weepah Spring would be redeveloped with a 1-acre riparian enclosure, and 1.25 miles of new pipeline would be laid down next to the old pipeline along the existing cherrystemmed road. No additional pipeline would be built. Keno Spring would be developed by hand. No heavy equipment would be used and no pipelines or access routes would be constructed. One short section of tie-off fence (less than .25 miles) would be built in the northeast corner of the WSA.

The remaining two proposed fencelines totalling approximately 9 miles would not be constructed, nor would the 1,200-acre vegetation conversion occur.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Commercial or private sales of woodland products would not be allowed within the WSA although, due to difficult access and rugged terrain no sales would be expected to occur even without wilderness designation.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Spring WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 200 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur annually in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and the 8.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

Wildlife Management Actions

A 1-acre area around Weepah Spring would be fenced to protect the riparian values. A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the WSA's ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Buried 1,600-gallon tanks would store the run-off from the slickrock. Small drinkers would be located near each of the tanks. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzlers would be used. These guzzlers are 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath their dome-shaped cover. They would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing. In addition, the Nevada Department of Wildlife would reintroduce desert bighorn sheep into the WSA.

Reality Management Actions

No communication facilities would be permitted within the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

The Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 2 recommends 33,873 acres as suitable for wilderness designation and 27,264 acres as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Subject to valid and existing rights, 33,873 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on any mining claims located within the WSA at the time of designation, prior to development. As of 1983, 294 mining claims existed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and 105 mining claims existed within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

The northern and western portions of the WSA, and to a lesser extent, the eastern portion of the WSA contain favorable lithologies for the discovery of disseminated gold deposits. Given valid existing claims at the time of designation, some exploration and development of mineral resources would occur totalling 105 acres of surface disturbance in the suitable portion and 197 acres in the unsuitable portion. Prior to approval of a plan of operations, mitigating measures would be adopted to protect the wilderness resource within the suitable portion of the WSA.

In the northern part of the WSA, exploration activities within the suitable portion would be done with drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles using existing access and driving cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from this exploration in this area would total 1 acre within the suitable portion of the WSA. In addition, 4 acres would be disturbed along the northwest bench by the construction of 2 miles of access road and numerous drill pads in the unsuitable portion.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236 acre open pit-heap leach operation. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development. Development of the 236 acre heap leach operation would involve 79 acres of surface disturbance within the suitable portion of the WSA and 157 acres of surface disturbance within the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Surface disturbance within the suitable portion would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump and 1 mile of new road construction disturbing 7 acres. Within the unsuitable portion, disturbance would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump; 2 miles of road upgrading disturbing 10 acres and 75 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities.

R61E

Timber Mtn
Pass

T3N



1 0 1 2 Miles

R62E

NYT CO
LINCOLN CO

T2N

T1N

T1S



PARTIAL ALTERNATIVE #2

—— CHERRY STEM ROAD
 ==== CHERRY STEM WAY

NV-040-246 WEEPAH SPRING

Exploration activities totalling 4 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve minimal access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20-acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .25-mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Due to unfavorable lithologies, additional precious mineral development is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or unsuitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Surface disturbance from development of a 40-acre gravel pit is anticipated to occur on the east side of the unsuitable portion of the WSA to serve Highway 318.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low, however, it is anticipated that one wildcat exploratory well would be drilled on the western bench of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance from oil and gas exploration would total approximately 5 acres, involving 3 acres for a well pad cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil and 2 acres for access. No oil and gas development is anticipated to occur on the suitable portion of the WSA.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 1 mile of vibroseis line on the west bench of the unsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of short segments of visible linear tracks would total 2 acres. Seismic exploration is not anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Geothermal resource potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the suitable or unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in six allotments within the Weepah Spring WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 431 AUM's are currently utilized within the suitable portion of the WSA and 1,004 AUM's within the nonsuitable portion. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the suitable portion of the WSA are an old spring development at Weepah Spring and 1.25 miles of associated pipeline along a road forming the boundary of the suitable portion. A .25-mile of fence exists near Oreana Canyon in the nonsuitable part of the WSA, as does a spring development at White Rock Spring with 1 mile of associated pipeline along a cherrystemmed road.

Keno Spring, located in the suitable part of the WSA would be developed by hand. No heavy equipment would be used and no pipelines or access routes would be constructed. Weepah Spring would be redeveloped and 1.25 miles of new pipeline would be laid down next to the old along the existing road. In addition, 6 miles of new pipeline would be constructed heading south into an undisturbed area of the nonsuitable part. The construction would impact a 6-mile long strip where the pipeline would be trenched and buried. Troughs would be located at its terminus.

The northern tie-off fence would not be constructed, nor would the 8 miles of pasture fence along the Timber Mountain ridge, all within the suitable portion of the WSA.

In the nonsuitable portion of the WSA the southern tie-off fence totalling .75 miles would be constructed. A low grade access route would be created by construction and maintenance of this fence. In addition, 7 miles of fence would be built around a 1,200-acre vegetation conversion in the western tip of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The area would be prescribed burned, and crested or Siberian wheatgrass would be seeded with a rangeland drill.

Woodland Products Management Actions

Commercial or private sales of woodland products would not be allowed within the 33,873-acre suitable portion of the WSA. Due to difficult access and rugged terrain no sales would be expected to occur even without wilderness designation.

Recreation Management Actions

The 33,873-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be designated as closed to recreational ORV use. Fewer than 50 visitor days of ORV use are estimated to occur in this area. Vehicular use would continue along the boundary roads and 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The 27,264-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain designated as open

WEEPAH SPRING

to ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP. A recreation management plan would be developed in conjunction with a cultural resource plan for recreational interpretation of the White River Narrows National Register Site which is partially located in the southern portion of the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

A one acre area around Weepah Spring in the suitable portion of the WSA would be fenced to protect the riparian values. One bighorn sheep guzzler would be located within the suitable portion of the WSA in the high country of the Seaman Range. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzler would utilize a natural slickrock apron. A buried 1,600-gallon tank would store the run-off from the slickrock. A small drinker would be located near the tank. If a natural slickrock apron is not found, a self contained camouflaged fiberglass guzzler would be used. The guzzler is 18-feet in diameter with a 1,800-2,100 gallon storage tank beneath its dome-shaped cover. It would be buried in the ground with only the cover showing.

Two additional bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA along the ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found a 1,300 square foot apron of black polyethylene would be laid on the ground. A painted or partially buried 3,000 gallon storage tank (or two smaller tanks) would be associated with each guzzler as well as a small drinker. The Nevada Department of Wildlife would reintroduce desert bighorn sheep into the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, however, the sheep would likely use the entire WSA.

Realty Management Actions

No communication facilities would be permitted within the suitable portion of the WSA. It is not anticipated that any facilities would be constructed in the nonsuitable portion.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

The No Wilderness Alternative recommends the entire 61,137-acre area as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Minerals Management Actions

Under this alternative, (No Wilderness), the entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA would remain open for mineral entry under the mining and mineral leasing laws. No validity examinations would be required prior to development. As of 1983, a total of 399 mining claims existed within the WSA.

Within the Weepah Springs WSA, surface disturbance from exploration and mining activity would total 504 acres. The northern and western portions of the WSA contain favorable lithologies for the discovery of disseminated gold deposits. Without wilderness designation, exploration efforts for disseminated gold deposits are expected to intensify in the areas presently recognized as being mineralized.

Exploration activities totalling 30 acres would lead to the development of a 325-acre open pit-heap leach operation. Surface disturbance associated with exploration would include approximately 5 miles of access, drill pad construction, and trenching. The disturbance resulting from exploration activities would eventually be consumed with development of the mine.

The development of the 325-acre heap leach operation would involve 100 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, process and support facilities; 90 acres for three 30-acre open pits, and 125 acres for associated waste dumps. Access to the mine would involve 10 acres of surface disturbance, including upgrading access created by prior exploration activities and haul road access connecting the open pits to the processing facilities.

Exploration activities totalling 20 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve access, drill pad construction, and trenching. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of two modest heap leach operations totalling 120 acres. Surface disturbance created by previous exploration would be consumed in the resulting mine operations. Surface disturbance for each mine would include a 20-acre open pit, a 30-acre waste dump, and 10 acres each for processing and support facilities.

In addition to the above exploration and development, 16 acres of surface disturbance associated with satellite exploration efforts would occur involving 10 acres of drill pads and access near the large mine and 3 acres each for the smaller operations.

Due to unfavorable lithologies, additional precious mineral development is not anticipated to take place within the Weepah Springs WSA.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump, and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Surface disturbance from development of a 40-acre gravel pit is anticipated to occur on the east side of the WSA to serve Highway 318.

Energy Management Actions

Oil and gas development potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low, however, it is anticipated that one wildcat exploratory well would be drilled on the western bench of the WSA. Surface disturbance from oil and gas exploration would total approximately 5 acres, involving 3 acres for a well pad cleared of surface vegetation and topsoil, and 2 acres for access.

Based on current exploration trends, some seismic exploration is anticipated to occur totalling 1 mile of vibroseis line on the west bench of the WSA. Surface disturbance in the form of short segments of visible linear tracks would total 2 acres.

Geothermal resource potential for the Weepah Springs WSA is considered to be low. Development of geothermal resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA.

Range Management Actions

Livestock (cattle and sheep) are grazed in six allotments within the Weepah Spring WSA. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Approximately 1,435 AUM's are currently utilized within the WSA. These levels may vary slightly in the future based on resource monitoring.

Existing range developments within the WSA consist of an old spring development at Weepah Spring with an associated 1.25 miles of pipeline, approximately .25 miles of fence near Oreana Canyon, and a spring development at White Rock Spring with 1 mile of associated pipeline along a cherrystemmed road.

Several fencelines and pipelines would be constructed within the WSA. An 8-mile pasture fence would be built along Timber Mountain ridge. Due to the ruggedness of most of the area, construction and maintenance would have to be done on horseback. A short .25-mile stretch of fence would tie off in the WSA from the much larger Sunnyside Fox Mountain Allotment Fence. Additionally, a .75-mile stretch of fence would tie off in the southern portion of the WSA. A low grade access route would be created by construction and maintenance of this fence.

Keno Spring, in the central portion of the WSA would be developed and 4.5 miles of pipeline constructed running south from the spring. Two miles of access road would be constructed to allow for heavy equipment access to the spring. A portion of the pipeline would run along the edge of this road. An additional 2.5 mile strip would be disturbed from trenching in a branch of the pipeline. Troughs would be located at its terminus. Weepah Spring would be redeveloped and 1.25 miles of new pipeline would be laid next to the old along the existing cherrystemmed road. In addition, six new miles of pipeline would be constructed in an undisturbed area. The construction would impact a 6-mile long strip where the pipeline would be trenched and buried. Troughs would be located at its terminus.

Seven miles of fence would be constructed around a 1,200-acre vegetation conversion in the western tip of the WSA. The area would be prescribed burned, and crested or Siberian wheatgrass would be seeded with a rangeland drill.

Recreation Management Actions

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Spring WSA would remain designated open to recreational ORV use as specified in the Schell MFP.

A recreation management plan would be developed in conjunction with a cultural resource plan for recreational interpretation of the White River Narrows Archaeological District, a National Register Site, partially located in the southern portion of the WSA.

Wildlife Management Actions

A one acre area around Weepah Spring would be fenced to protect the riparian values. A total of three bighorn sheep guzzlers would be located along the WSA's ridgeline approximately 3 miles apart. If suitable terrain is found, the guzzlers would utilize a natural slickrock apron. Should natural slickrock not be found a 1,300 square foot apron of black polyethylene would be laid on the ground. A painted or partially buried 3,000 gallon storage tank (or two smaller tanks) would be associated with each guzzler as well as a small drinker. In addition, the Nevada Department of Wildlife would be reintroducing desert bighorn sheep into the WSA.

Realty Management Actions

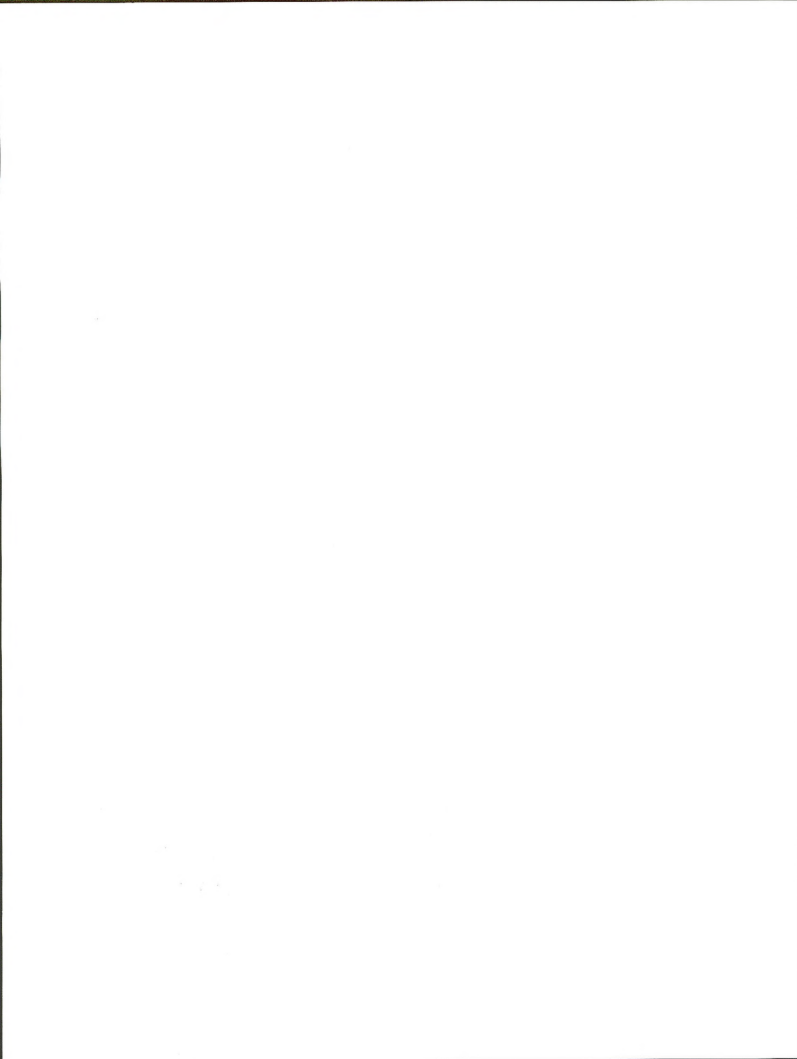
A small communication facility would be placed on the highest peak in the WSA. Construction and maintenance would be done by helicopter and approximately a .25-acre of surface disturbance would result.

TABLE 11

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS - WEEPAH SPRING

IMPACT TOPIC	PROPOSED ACTION	ALL WILDERNESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	<p>The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.</p> <p>Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.</p>	<p>The impact of designation of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.</p>
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES	<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 347 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 504 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 187 acres if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be located outside of the WSA to minimize impacts on the wilderness values.</p>
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES	<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The one exploratory well expected without wilderness designation would be foregone and the 1 mile of seismic exploration would have to be accomplished on foot. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development is not expected to take place.</p>
GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION	<p>There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight and one-half miles of fence and three pipelines totaling 13 miles would not be constructed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Two pasture fences, a seeding, and four water developments would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated distribution would be foregone.</p>
RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE	<p>Recreational ORV use of 125 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.</p>	<p>Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.</p>

PARTIAL WILDERNESS NO. 2	NO WILDERNESS	IMPACT TOPIC
<p>The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, some of the high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.</p> <p>Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.</p>	<p>The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost in the northern portion of the Weepah Springs WSA. These wilderness values would also be affected to a much lesser degree throughout the WSA near range developments and by occasional ORV use. High scenic values in the northern portion of the WSA would be lost.</p>	<p>WILDERNESS VALUES</p>
<p>Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 307 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources.</p>	<p>EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES</p>
<p>Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.</p>	<p>EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES</p>
<p>There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight miles of fence and two water developments (pipelines) would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.</p>	<p>GRAZING FACILITY MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION</p>
<p>Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.</p>	<p>There would be no impact to recreation ORV use.</p>	<p>RECREATIONAL OFF-ROAD USE</p>



CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a brief description of the elements of the environment in each WSA that could be affected by actions proposed in the alternatives. In an analysis of the critical elements, BLM personnel determined that the following resources do not occur or would not be affected by any actions proposed: floodplains, wetlands, prime or unique farmlands, areas of critical environmental concern, prime or sole source of drinking water, air quality, wild or scenic rivers, or soils.

All the maps referred to in this chapter are located in a map section between Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

MOUNT GRAFTON WSA

NV-040-169

General Environment

The Mount Grafton WSA is located in east-central Nevada about 50 miles south of Ely and includes a portion of the Schell Creek Mountain Range. Mount Grafton itself, at 10,990 feet, is the tallest peak on BLM-administered land in Nevada. The mountains are rugged fault block mountains composed of sedimentary rocks 300-600 million years old. Numerous rock outcrops stand out in all portions of the mountain range. There is extensive tree cover throughout the mountains although large open areas are interspersed among the trees. Species include pinyon and juniper, white fir, limber and bristlecone pine, aspen, and cottonwood. The edge effect created by this varied vegetation provides excellent habitat for a number of wildlife species, including Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, mule deer, elk, and mountain lions.

The lower elevations of the WSA (i.e., bench and valley land) are covered primarily by sagebrush and other shrubs, although some high bench areas support ungrazed grass meadows.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: While the Mount Grafton WSA is generally in a natural condition, several unnatural features occur within it, primarily along its periphery. These include 1,100 acres of seedings, six stock reservoirs, 2.5 miles of aqueduct, 10.5 miles of fencelines, and several scattered old mining adits. The most noticeable impacts are those associated with mining and mineral exploration. Switchback roads, excavated areas, and an abandoned millsite and tramway at Mill Creek are man-made intrusions

MOUNT GRAFTON

excluded from the WSA by cherrystemming although they are visible from the surrounding WSA. A total of approximately 50 miles of roads and ways have been cherrystemmed from the WSA. Most of these vehicle routes are located along the east and west benches. These have differing impacts on the apparent naturalness of the area, but generally are not highly intrusive except when in their immediate vicinity. The core of the WSA is in an almost completely natural condition.

Solitude: Opportunities for solitude in the Mount Grafton WSA are outstanding. The sheer size of the area alone makes for good opportunities. Combined with this are the excellent topographic screening of this part of the Schell Creek Range, with many side canyons and large rock outcrops; and excellent vegetative screening from dense pinyon-juniper stands and large stands of aspen and fir. The combined effect of these attributes is to create an environment where a person can seclude himself from all man-made influences.

The portion offering the greatest sense of freedom from development is the ridgeline, extending from Mount Grafton south. Here, the elevation (9,000 feet and higher) serves to accentuate feelings of remoteness by placing the visitor high above all development. The view from the ridge encompasses hundreds of square miles of land as far as 60 miles away. One drawback of the ridgeline, however, is the fact that it can accommodate only a limited number of users before solitude is adversely affected. (Current use of the ridgeline is virtually nil.) The slopes of the mountain range provide excellent solitude opportunities and many visitors can be accommodated while still maintaining the quality of opportunities.

Solitude opportunities are probably most extensive in the north end of the WSA, where the mountains are lower but also more varied, with less of a single ridgeline character. The feeling here is more enclosed and confined than the open ridgeline, but it is this that allows for a much larger number of users while maintaining the same quality of opportunities.

The benchlands areas have opportunities for solitude lower in quality than the remainder of the WSA. Both the topographic and the vegetative screening on the benches is less than in the mountains, so that secluded areas are far fewer and carrying capacity far lower.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for recreation exist in the Mount Grafton WSA due to a combination of good diversity and high quality opportunities. Hiking, camping, and backpacking opportunities are excellent on the ridgeline where the scenic vistas both outside and within the WSA are aweinspiring. The diversity of natural features present on the ridgeline -- aspen stands, conifer stands, bristlecone pines, open grass and shrub areas, talus fields, quartz outcrops -- makes any recreational pursuit enjoyable and always interesting.

These opportunities extend into the north end of the WSA and along the slopes of the mountain range where their quality is still high but not quite as spectacular. A special attraction of these areas, however, is the presence of several water sources (potability unknown) which can significantly lighten the weight of supplies required for longer stays in the area.

Deer hunting opportunities exist all along the east and west benches where numerous vehicle routes provide access into the backcountry. Blue grouse and mountain lion hunting are also possible at higher elevations.

Nature study opportunities are excellent. The many remarkable features of the area (bristlecone pines, mountain lions, bighorn sheep, elk, quartz outcrops, large aspen stands) are of interest by themselves. Also of interest are the interrelationships evident between different components of the environment, such as predators and prey (deer and lions), wildlife and vegetation, fire and vegetation, and water, wildlife, and vegetation. The different zones of vegetation, soils, and wildlife associated with changes in elevation are clearly stratified in the WSA.

Other types of recreation possible in the WSA include trapping, rock climbing, photography, and fishing at North Creek and Geyser Creek.

The quality of these opportunities generally diminishes as the elevation decreases. It is lowest on the benchlands where the vegetation, wildlife, and scenery is least varied.

Special Features: The high scenic value of the WSA is considered to be a special feature. Many factors contribute to it, including the massiveness of the landform; the alternating open and forested areas with their different and contrasting colors; the contrasting textures of different portions such as talus fields, grass meadows, and rock outcrops; and bright fall color provided by large aspen stands. The North Creek and Mount Grafton scenic areas are formally designated areas which lie within the WSA.

The North Creek area on the east side of the WSA is a large riparian zone with abundant fauna and flora. With an average flow rate of around .75 cubic feet per second, the creek is one of only a few perennial streams entirely on BLM-administered land in the Ely District. Riparian zones such as the one supported by North Creek exist as virtual islands where flora and fauna occur in far greater concentration than in non-riparian areas. The observation of biological phenomena and ecological interrelationships within the area is a rich educational experience for the nature observer.

Bristlecone pines occur in their classic, gnarled configuration on and near the ridgeline south of Mount Grafton. They are members of an uncommon species (sp. Pinus aristata) which is also the longest lived species known to man. They are interesting subjects for nature study and photography.

MOUNT GRAFTON

Elk and bighorn sheep may periodically be seen in the WSA. Although not unusual or rare on the North American continent, they are uncommon in the Great Basin. For many wilderness users, the sighting of one of these animals is a special experience that enhances the visit to the area.

Mineral Resources

The Mount Grafton WSA has long been of interest to mining concerns, and has produced limited amounts of silver and tungsten. As of August 1983, a total of 65 claims existed within the WSA.

Most claims in the area are located on existing mines in the mining districts. A few additional claims are located on the west bench. (Refer to the Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Map.)

Exploration work is affecting a small portion (less than 100 acres) at Mill Creek on the east bench. Other claims are scattered through the area, many with evidence of historic mining (adits, shafts, prospect pits, mine shacks, an abandoned tramway). These are located mainly on the benches, with the only such impacts in the high country located at Schwartz Spring on the south boundary.

Most of the Mount Grafton WSA is not considered favorable for containing large ore deposits. There is 12,000 acres of a high potential for low-grade tungsten and zinc ore along the southern boundary. The southern and central parts of the WSA have 34,000 acres of moderate potential for low-grade deposits containing tungsten, silver, zinc, lead, gold, and fluorite. The remaining 27,200 acres of the WSA has low potential for metallic mineral resources (GEM, 1983). (Refer to the Mineral and Energy Potential Map.)

Energy Resources

The Mount Grafton WSA has been rated as having low potential for oil and gas (GEM, 1983).

As of 1983, oil and gas leases were held only on the fringe areas of the WSA, mainly on the western bench. (Refer to Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Map.)

There are warm springs with temperatures of 65-70° F. located just outside the southeast boundary of the WSA. Development potential for these springs is low because of the low temperatures.

Livestock Grazing

The value of most of the WSA for grazing is generally low because of the mountainous and forested nature of the landscape. The periphery of the WSA is grazed, however, and contains several range developments including portions of three seedings totalling 1,100 acres, six stock reservoirs, and 10.5 miles of fenceline. (Refer to the Range Development Map.) Cattle are grazed in the WSA in three allotments, the Cattle Camp/Cave Valley, the Cave Valley Ranch, and the Geyser Allotments. Refer to Appendix C for additional grazing information.

Woodland Resources

The study area contains about 3.5 percent of the manageable woodland in the Schell Resource Area. Because it is within 50 miles of Ely, it is used by Ely residents for wood supply. The area also is within the demand region of both Salt Lake City and Las Vegas Christmas tree cutters, and commercial cutting has occurred in the past.

Recreation Values

Recreation use in the area consists mostly of hunting, and fishing for trout in North Creek. The area has been a popular hunting and fishing spot for local residents for several generations.

Wildlife Resources

An area of about 4,800 acres along the ridgeline south from Mount Grafton is identified as key deer summer range. Other wildlife using the area include elk, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, raptors, songbirds, common small mammals and reptiles. North Creek has rainbow, brook, and cutthroat hybrid trout which were stocked many years ago. Geyser Creek has rainbow and brook trout which were also stocked many years ago.

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are no Federally listed threatened or endangered species within the Mount Grafton WSA. A State-listed plant species, rose beehive cactus (*Coryphantha vivipara*) is located near the WSA and may occur within the WSA. This species is given a 3C category. The ferruginous hawk, also a State-listed sensitive species, nests within the WSA along the lower forested slopes. Refer to Appendix D.

Lands and Realty

There are six private parcels of land that lie adjacent to the WSA. The following additional private parcels totalling 280 acres are surrounded by the WSA:

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Parcel No. 1, T. 11 N., R. 64 E., sec. 33, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, (40 acres) White Pine County. Robber's Roost Spring is located on the parcel. Water rights are held by the landowner and the spring is an important livestock water. There is a cherrystemmed access route to the parcel.

Parcel No. 2, T. 10 N., R. 64 E., sec. 10, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, (40 acres) White Pine County. Wildcat Spring is located on the parcel. Water rights are held by the landowner and the spring is an important livestock water. There is no vehicular access to the parcel.

Parcel No. 3, T. 10 N., R. 64 E., sec. 27, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, (40 acres) White Pine County. There is no vehicular access to the parcel.

Parcel No. 4, T. 10 N., R. 64 E., sec. 34, E $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, (80 acres) White Pine County. The parcel is accessed by a cherrystemmed route.

Parcel No. 5, T. 9 N., R. 64 E., sec. 4, N $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, (80 acres) Lincoln County. The parcel is accessed by a cherrystemmed route.

A rail corridor proposed along the western edge of the study area has been identified by the White Pine Power Project. The corridor is one of several alternative routes being considered that would allow coal transportation to the White Pine Power Plant if it is eventually constructed.

FAR SOUTH EGANS WSA NV-040-I72

General Environment

The Far South Egans WSA is located in east-central Nevada about 50 miles south of Ely. The WSA consists primarily of an extremely rugged portion of the Egan Range. The west side of the mountain unit is characterized by spectacularly rugged cliffs, while the east side is less rugged and supports a dense cover of pinyon and juniper. At higher elevations (about 7,000 feet) relatively large stands of ponderosa pines exist. Mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, mountain lions, and numerous raptors are among numerous wildlife species found in the mountains.

The lower elevations within the WSA are the alluvial benches associated with the mountain range. They exist in sharp contrast to the mountains, with mainly sagebrush, grass, and forb cover and very little topographic relief.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: The Far South Egans WSA as a whole is in a very natural condition. Unnatural features in the WSA are located almost entirely on the benchland areas. The most frequent unnatural feature is cherrystemmed routes. These are in almost every case primitive two-track routes, but are

almost completely unscreened in the low, open sagebrush country where they appear. Vehicular use of the routes also has an impact on naturalness when it occurs. The west bench is most affected, with 13 routes, totalling about 19 miles.

Just on the western edge of the WSA there are three cherrystemmed material pits, used in the construction of U.S. Highway 318. These are very unnatural in appearance, but have a very limited impact on the unit as a whole. Also on the west side is about .75 miles of fenceline. Within the unit's core, the only unnatural features are the remnants of old logging operations from the turn of the century. Logging occurred on the north and south of Granite Spring and on the east side in Sawmill Canyon. Evidence of logging operations includes a few skid trails, large ponderosa stumps, and a sawmill site in Sawmill Canyon. In the many years that have passed since the logging occurred, the area has rehabilitated itself, and the few traces that remain are considered a special feature of historical value.

Solitude: The Far South Egans WSA offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. Topographic screening is provided by many unroaded canyons and by the rugged layout of the high mountain country. Adding to this is the large size of the area, dense tree cover in many portions, and good configuration. Also enhancing solitude opportunities is the lack of destination points (with the exception of Whipple Cave) that would serve to concentrate use. Rather, use would be dispersed throughout the area, helping the natural carrying capacity of the area absorb a number of users while still allowing for solitude.

The benchland areas provide much less opportunity for solitude because of their lack of vegetative and topographic screening.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for spelunking exist in Whipple Cave on the west side of the WSA. A wild limestone solution cave, Whipple Cave is in a highly natural condition due mainly to the vertical 700 foot descent necessary to gain entrance to it. Many cave decorations adorn the walls, ceilings, and floors. These include drapery and rimstone dam formations as well as a huge column over 30 feet high. Several unconfirmed reports exist of other caves in the WSA, and potential indeed appears good in the extensive limestone outcrops in the area.

Many other recreation opportunities abound in the area. The dramatic topography of the mountains make for difficult but highly enjoyable hiking, camping, and backpacking. The scenery of the area, especially as seen from the ridgeline, enhances all such opportunities. Deer may be seen at close range in an undisturbed setting in the bristlecone and ponderosa pine forests. The trees themselves are of interest to the visitor because of their rarity in the region. The ponderosas and bristlecones occur together in one portion of the area, an unusual commingling, of interest to the naturalist. The remains of an old sawmill are also a point of interest, a historic remnant of Nevada's past.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Other recreation opportunities of good quality include technical and nontechnical rock climbing and nature study. The combination of the quality and different types of recreation available in the WSA make for outstanding opportunities.

Opportunities for recreation on the lower slopes are of a much lower quality. The open sagebrush benchlands provide some opportunities for nature study not available in the preliminarily suitable portion, but other forms of recreation are adversely affected by the lack of variation in topography, vegetation, and scenery.

Special Features: Several special features exist in the Far South Egans WSA. The aforementioned ponderosa and bristlecone pines are special features because of their relative scarcity in this part of the region. Bristlecone pines are well known as the oldest living plant species, and their occurrence in the WSA is especially significant because of the very low elevation at which they occur (as low as 7,000 feet) and their combination with ponderosa pines in one portion. The ponderosa pines are a relict population from earlier climatological conditions and also from the days when they were extensively logged.

Whipple Cave is a special feature, an excellent example of limestone solutioning. For the geologic sightseer, the arduous passage into the cave is well worth the effort.

The remains of logging operations serve as a significant point of historic interest, a reminder of earlier times in Nevada when then-plentiful stands of ponderosa pines were heavily logged by small operators.

Mineral Resources

The entire Far South Egans study area has low mineral resource potential for metallic minerals (GEM, 1983). (Refer to the Mineral and Energy Potential Map.) Currently, there are no mining claims located within the WSA.

Energy Resources

The energy resource potential for oil and gas within the Far South Egans WSA is considered low (GEM, 1983). Much of the WSA was leased for oil and gas in 1983.

Livestock Grazing

The Far South Egans WSA is covered by two grazing allotments. Cattle only are grazed in the Shingle Pass and Sunnyside Allotments. Refer to Appendix C. Most of the livestock use occurs on the lower slopes due to the predominance of steep, forested terrain in the center of the WSA. The present grazing quality is poor to fair. The WSA contains few range

developments. These consist of a .75-mile stretch of fenceline and one short pipeline. (Refer to the Range Development Map.) Both of the grazing allotments are in the "M", Maintain, category. Proposed range developments in this category are a lower priority.

Woodland Resources

The Far South Egans WSA possesses approximately 1.9 percent of the manageable woodland in the Schell Resource Area. The northern portion of the WSA along Shingle Pass and the eastern benches lend themselves to forest product harvest. The northern end of the WSA has received unpermitted fuelwood cutting in the past.

Recreation Values

The major recreational draw to this rugged area is the spelunking opportunities in Whipple Cave. The cave has been drawing visitors since the early 1900's.

Wildlife Resources

This unit provides 44,200 acres of yearlong deer range and 42,800 acres of mountain lion winter range, as well as bighorn sheep range. Desert bighorn sheep were recently reintroduced into the area.. The low forested areas on the east and west benches provide nesting habitat for ferruginous hawks and sage grouse strutting grounds.

The mountains of the Far South Egans WSA contributes to the watershed which feeds the warm spring ponds at Flag Spring outside of the WSA. These ponds are considered Critical Habitat for the endangered White River Spinedace (*Lepidomeda albigallii*). Refer to Appendix D.

Lands and Realty

There are no parcels of private land located adjacent to or within the boundaries of the WSA.

FORTIFICATION RANGE WSA NV-040-177

General Environment

The Fortification Range is located in east-central Nevada about 50 miles southeast of Ely. The WSA is a low mountain range whose visible surface is composed almost entirely of volcanic materials (tuffs and tuffaceous breccia). Most of the range is gentle mountains, but on the north end it becomes very rugged and precipitous (elevations over 8,000 feet) where the rock has been naturally eroded. Sheer cliffs and massive outcrops form a huge natural amphitheater at the head of the Cottonwood Canyon drainage.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Tree cover here consists of scattered ponderosa pines, pinyon and juniper, aspens and cottonwoods, while nearly everywhere else the unit is densely forested by pinyon and juniper. The lowest elevations (below 6,000 feet) sustain sagebrush, grass, and forb cover. Wildlife in the WSA include mule deer, antelope, mountain lions, and nesting raptors, including golden eagles. Wild horses also range throughout the area. Seventeen springs are scattered through the area, sustaining about 130 acres of important riparian vegetation.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Most of the Fortification Range WSA is in a completely natural condition. The east bench land is penetrated at several points by cherrystemmed routes, most less than a mile long. These are all well screened by dense tree cover and have very little impact on the naturalness of the area as a whole. Most are used only for access by hunters and pine nut gatherers.

Two roads, each about 3 miles long, extend into the area, one on the south end in Smiley Canyon, the other on the west in the Gouge Eye. Both of these are minimally intrusive as they meander among the trees, well screened by the forest canopy. Construction on these is limited mainly to limbing of overhanging branches and very occasional tree removal. Their only apparent use is by hunters and campers.

A few range improvements exist in the area. A fenceline on the south end extends into the WSA for a distance of 3 miles. Two miles of the fenceline have been cherrystemmed out of the WSA. A drift fence just over a mile long extends into the northwest corner of the WSA. One fenceline tie off, less than 1,000 feet in length exists on the west boundary. Cottonwood Spring in the northeast is developed and diverted via an underground pipeline eastward to an area just outside the WSA. Other projects, some abandoned, occur just on the eastern periphery of the area. These include two small corrals, three fenceline tie-offs totalling less than 5,000 feet in length, and an abandoned pipeline. None of these, either singly or together, affects the naturalness of the WSA as a whole. Refer to the Range Development Map.)

Solitude: Excellent opportunities for solitude exist in the WSA. Good vegetative cover exists in nearly all parts of the WSA, and good topographic screening is provided by the numerous side canyons and diverse landform of the mountain range. These characteristics, combined with good unit configuration and good size, make for many secluded spots where visitors may escape all visible and audible evidence of man.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation exist in the Fortification Range WSA mainly as a result of the outstanding scenery on the north end. Here, hiking, camping, and nature study are enhanced by the extraordinary setting provided by the weathered rock formations. Opportunities for observing the geology of the area constitute a separate class of high quality recreation opportunities in themselves.

Features of the area interesting to the visitor include narrow, steep-walled canyons that sustain riparian vegetation and fauna; ponderosa pines; numerous raptors, including golden eagles, ferruginous hawks, long-eared owls, Cooper's Hawks, and prairie falcons; a band of feral goats, mountain lions; a wild horse herd which ranges into the highest elevations of the range; and the interaction of all these and other components of the ecosystem.

These opportunities are easily enjoyed by most users. Access to the head of Cottonwood Canyon is gained by a difficult but short (1 to 2 hour) hike. Travel within the canyon is difficult and somewhat hazardous due to the loose, crumbly nature of the rock.

As one moves south through the range from Cottonwood Canyon, the quality of recreation opportunities declines. The diverse ecosystem of Cottonwood Canyon changes to a much less diverse pinyon-juniper ecosystem. Scenery is less spectacular, wildlife is less abundant and diverse. Opportunities for recreation exist, but their quality is not as noteworthy.

Special Features: The scenic quality of the WSA's north end, described above, is considered a special feature.

The ponderosa pines located in and around Cottonwood Canyon are unusual in eastern Nevada, remnant populations of larger stands that existed under different climatological conditions. They also serve as a seed source and a source of genetic diversity, and contribute as one element of the area's scenic beauty. They therefore serve as a special feature of the area.

The wild horses of the WSA are part of the Fortification Herd. They range throughout the mountains, and have established a crossing somewhere in the mountains south of Cottonwood Canyon. The United States Congress has recognized that wild horses enrich the lives of the American public. They also enrich the experience of the wilderness user with their beauty of form and movement in a wild, unrestrained state. They are therefore a special feature of the area. Another special feature of the WSA is the high number of nesting raptors that it supports.

Mineral Resources

A large portion of the Fortification Range WSA is covered by a thick capping of Tertiary volcanics that conceals older rocks. At the northern end of the WSA, rocks as old as upper Mississippian are recognized. There was a complete lack of mining claims within the WSA in 1983 and no known indication of mineralization. The entire area has been rated low for mineral potential. (GEM, 1983)

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Energy Resources

Oil and gas potential in the WSA has also been rated as low (GEM, 1983). There has been no exploration or development work in the WSA except for some seismic testing on the western fringe of the area. This activity was the easternmost extension of seismic work in Lake Valley where interest is centered, rather than in the mountains. Oil and gas deposition is far less certain in the Fortification Range than in the adjacent valleys and exploration and development work in the mountains is certain to be more expensive due to the thick covering of volcanic materials and the much more difficult access. As of 1983, the entire WSA was leased for oil and gas. (Refer to the Mineral Claims/Mineral Leasing Map.)

Livestock Grazing

The Fortification Range WSA is covered by four grazing allotments. Cattle and sheep are grazed in the South Spring Valley and Wilson Creek Allotments, and cattle only are grazed in the Geyser and Cottonwood Allotments. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. Much of the interior of the study area is too steep for use by livestock and most grazing occurs in a few of the canyons and along the western edge. The present grazing quality is fair to poor, in part due to the thick stands of pinyon and juniper and the lack of forage.

A few range developments exist in the area. A fenceline on the south extends into the WSA for a distance of 3 miles. Two miles of the fenceline have been cherrystemmed out of the WSA. A drift fence just over a mile long extends into the northwest corner of the WSA. One fenceline tie-off, less than 1,000 feet exists on the west boundary. Cottonwood Spring in the northeast portion of the area is developed and the water is diverted via an underground pipeline eastward, outside of the WSA. Other projects, some abandoned, occur just on the eastern periphery of the area. These include three small corrals, three fenceline tie-offs totalling less than 5,000 feet in length, and an abandoned pipeline. (Refer to the Range Development Map.)

Woodland Resources

The Fortification Range WSA possesses approximately 2.5 percent of the manageable woodland in the Schell Resource Area. During the 1960's Christmas trees were commercially harvested along the northeast edge of the WSA. Most of the accessible portions of the WSA are used by commercial pinyon pine nut harvesters as crops become available. The WSA continues to have good potential for commercial harvest of fuelwood, Christmas trees, and pine nuts.

Recreation Values

The WSA is known for its scenery in Cottonwood Canyon, but recreation use here is fairly light. Hunting and trapping are popular pastimes. The area receives use during pine nut season when families come to pick the nuts.

Wildlife Resources

The WSA offers good nesting habitat for raptors. The deer herd using this area has declined 80 percent over the last 10 years due partially to habitat reduction. Recently, however, this downward trend seems to have stopped and the deer population may be slightly increasing. Bighorn sheep may be reintroduced to the area although it is a low priority. Most of the area is good mountain lion winter range.

Lands and Realty

There are no parcels of private land located within the boundaries of the Fortification Range WSA. One private parcel located at Indian Springs forms a portion of the northern boundary of the WSA.

TABLE MOUNTAIN WSA NV-040-197

General Environment: The Table Mountain WSA is located in east-central Nevada in the Wilson Creek Mountain Range. The north end of the WSA consists of low foothills (average elevation approximately 7,000 feet) forested with pinyon and juniper. The terrain becomes abruptly steeper as it leads south to Table Mountain. The central portion which lies adjacent to the Table is mountainous (peak elevations above 8,600 feet) with some large rock outcrops and steep canyons. Vegetation varies from open grass and shrub areas to ponderosa pines and other conifers. The precipitous terrain continues throughout the south end of the WSA, but becomes less craggy and more densely forested with mountain mahogany, pinyon and juniper, and other conifers. Wildlife that occur in the area include deer, elk, and several species of raptors, including bald eagles during the winter.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Most of the area is in a completely natural condition since most unnatural features were excluded during the wilderness inventory. This has resulted, however, in an irregularly shaped unit that is long and pinched at the midsection. A few cherrystemmed roads and ways intrude into the area and effect the naturalness of the periphery, but are noticeable only when in their immediate proximity.

Solitude: Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist in the WSA due to its predominantly forested nature and steep, varied terrain. The vegetation is often so thick that it is nearly impenetrable, and the screening it provides is sufficient to provide opportunities for solitude for many individuals or several parties.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for recreation exist in the Table Mountain WSA. These include most of the usual forms of recreation such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, nature study, and hunting (deer and upland game). Opportunities for some of these are limited in much of the area by the unrelieved thick vegetative cover. Due to the thick vegetation which hampers livestock grazing there are some hidden riparian areas only lightly grazed by elk which offer excellent destination points for visitors. Interesting rock formations, meadows, and ponderosa pine all enhance recreational opportunities. Wildlife is particularly abundant in portions of the WSA including mule deer, and wintering bald eagles.

Special Features: The scenic quality of a small area within the central portion on the WSA is considered to be a special feature. This area offers the visitor a relatively pristine meadow complex, a healthy regenerating ponderosa pine forest, and the beautifully sculptured hoodoo rock formations all found in close proximity to each other. This ponderosa pine stand is unusual in eastern Nevada and is a remnant population of larger stands which existed under different climatological conditions. Bald eagles which can be found roosting within the WSA in the winter time are also considered a special feature in the area.

Mineral Resources

The northern segment of the WSA falls within the Atlanta/Silver Peak Mining District, from which gold has been produced. The Paleozoic formations from which this gold is extracted extends beneath the volcanic cover of the WSA. Furthermore, precious-metal mineralization is observed within the volcanics to the south of the Atlanta/Silver Peak District in the west-central portion of the WSA. As of 1983, the WSA contained approximately 124 mining claims. The entire WSA is rated as having a moderate potential for metallic minerals (GEM, 1983).

Minerals which might occur in the area include gold, silver, tungsten, barium, thallium, and lead. Six hundred tons of gold ore per day were milled at the Atlanta Mine in 1979. (Refer to the Mining Claims/Mineral Leasing, and Mineral and Energy Potential Maps.)

Energy Resources

Oil and gas potential in the WSA has been rated as low (GEM, 1983). As of 1983, the entire WSA was leased for oil and gas. No exploration or development work has taken place.

Livestock Grazing

The importance of grazing within this WSA is low due to the steep terrain, low value forage plants, and thick vegetative cover. The Wilson Creek Allotment covers the WSA and cattle are grazed year round within this allotment. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. The Wilson Creek Allotment is in an "I", Improve, category which means that projects

proposed within this allotment have a high priority. There are currently no range developments within the WSA. A few reservoirs exist near the boundary of the WSA but are not within it. The Bowling Fenceline forms about 3/4 of a mile of the WSA southern boundary.

Woodland Resources

The Table Mountain WSA possesses approximately 4 percent of the manageable woodland within the Schell Resource Area. During the 1960's extensive cutting for Christmas trees occurred in this area. The WSA continues to have good potential for commercial Christmas trees and fuelwood.

Recreation Values

The northern, more open area has long been a popular spot for pleasure driving, although most of the ORV use occurs just outside the WSA in the actual table area.

Wildlife Resources

Bald eagles can occasionally be seen in or near the WSA during the winter months.

The thick pinyon and juniper tree cover has created problems for mule deer by eliminating good forage plants for the animals. The Horsethief Habitat Management Plan has identified areas which should be converted from pinyon and juniper to more palatable shrub and grass species. About 204 acres of riparian habitat exist within the WSA.

Lands and Realty

The Table Mountain WSA contains an unusually large amount of private land. Approximately 12.5 miles of the boundary of the WSA is formed by 10 parcels of private land. In addition, there are eight parcels of private land totally surrounded by the WSA with no constructed access. Most of these, are 40-acre parcels situated on a spring source. These parcels, listed below, are all owned by A. M. Swallow Property:

Parcel No. 1, T. 5 N., R. 68 E., sec. 2, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 2, T. 5 N., R. 68 E., sec. 26, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 160 acres.

Parcel No. 3, T. 5 N., R. 68 E., sec. 27, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 4, T. 6 N., R. 68 E., sec. 12, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 5, T. 6 N., R. 68 E., sec. 29, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 6, T. 6 N., R. 68 E., sec. 35, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Parcel No. 7, T. 6 N., R. 68 E., sec. 36, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 8, T. 6 N., R. 69 E., sec. 31, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

WHITE ROCK RANGE WSA NV-040-202

General Environment

The WSA is located in Lincoln County in southeastern Nevada in the White Rock Range. It is made up of gentle mountain terrain with associated foothills and benchlands. The mountains trend north and south and are basically a single ridgeline, but are fairly broad and are dissected by numerous side canyons and drainages. Minimum elevation is under 6,200 feet. The elevation of the ridgeline rises gradually to the north to a peak of over 9,000 feet. Most of the WSA is forested with pinyon-juniper woodland, but the north end exhibits some interesting differences, including high open sagebrush country, ponderosa pines and white fir, and two high (but intermittent) mountain lakes. Interspersed throughout the area are several small grass meadows where springs support riparian vegetation. About 18,000 acres of the WSA are crucial deer summer range, and a small elk herd resides in the area.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: The White Rock Range WSA is in a very natural condition. The only unnatural features are five ways, none of which are more than a mile in length, and all but one of which are well screened by dense forest cover.

An old burn of about 500 acres is located in the southern end. This is an entirely natural feature, both in origin and appearance.

Solitude: The opportunities for solitude in this WSA are outstanding. There occur no sights and sounds of man within the WSA, and none of those outside are obtrusive enough to detract in any way from solitude opportunities. The vegetative screening in the area is exceptional, provided by an almost uninterrupted forest of pinyon and juniper, with a scattering of other conifers. This, combined with good topographic screening provided by the mountains themselves, as well as a good unit configuration, allow for outstanding solitude opportunities just about anywhere within the area. The area would be capable of sustaining relatively high use (much higher than now occurs) while still providing solitude for anyone who seeks it.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for recreation are very good. Current recreation opportunities include hiking, camping, trapping, deer hunting, blue grouse hunting, and rockhounding. They are enjoyable, each for different reasons, all because they exist in an unspoiled, natural setting away from the influence of man.

Special Features: A resident elk herd of about 20-30 animals is considered a special feature of the WSA. The elk use the northern portion of the WSA, as well as the area to the north of the WSA. Seeing these animals enhances the visitor's wilderness experience.

Mineral Resources

Mining activity has not occurred in the wilderness study area. The White Rock Range Wilderness Study Area has moderate potential for metallic mineral resources (GEM, 1983). As of 1983, one mining claim existed in the southern part of the WSA. (Refer to the Mining Claims/Mineral Leasing Map.)

Energy Resources

The White Rock Range has been rated as having low potential for oil and gas and low potential for geothermal resources (GEM, 1983). As of 1983, the portion of the WSA within Nevada was totally leased for oil and gas.

Livestock Grazing

The grazing quality for most of the area is low due to the thick vegetation and the resulting fair to poor forage value. Only cattle are grazed in this portion of the Wilson Creek Allotment which covers the unit. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. The Wilson Creek Allotment is in an "I", Improve, category which means that projects proposed within this allotment have a high priority.

There are currently no range developments within the WSA. The White Rock Wash Seeding Fence forms about 2.5 miles of the WSA's southwestern boundary.

Woodland Resources

The White Rock Range WSA possesses approximately 1 percent of the manageable woodland within the Schell Resource Area. During the 1960's some cutting of Christmas trees occurred. The WSA possesses excellent stands of fuelwood cordage and prime pinyon nut harvest potential. Numerous pinyon nut sales have occurred here in the past.

Wildlife Resources

About 18,200 acres of the WSA have been identified as crucial deer summer range. Thick pinyon and juniper tree cover has created problems for mule deer by eliminating good forage plants. This has resulted in a steady deer herd decline of 80 percent over the last 10 years. Recently, however, this downward trend seems to have stopped and the deer population may be increasing slightly. About 107 acres of riparian habitat exist within the WSA.

PARSNIP PEAK

Lands and Realty

No private land exists within the WSA or along the boundary. One section of State land in Utah is adjacent to the northeastern boundary.

PARSNIP PEAK WSA NV-040-206

General Environment

The Parsnip Peak WSA is located in east-central Nevada near the Nevada/Utah border, in the Great Basin physiographic province. The town of Pioche is 4 miles to the west of the WSA, and the hamlet of Ursine is 6 miles to the south.

The WSA includes in its northern two-thirds a broad fairly gentle portion of the Wilson Creek Range (maximum elevation 8,916) feet. Most of the mountain and bench portion is densely forested with pinyon and juniper, cliffrose, and mountain mahogany. Substantial acreage is also forested with aspen, and occasional stands of ponderosa pines occur in certain portions. On the north end of the WSA, a 8,900-acre area was burned during the catastrophic Wilson Burn in 1974. The burned area was aerially seeded in 1976. The result is a large grass-covered area of rolling mountains. The south end of the WSA is the valley bottom portion of Patterson Wash. This area is vegetated by sagebrush, forbs, and grasses.

The geological composition of the WSA is fairly simple, composed mainly of undifferentiated volcanic rocks and older alluvium, with some tuffs and tuffaceous sediments, all from the Tertiary Period. Underlying these is a more complicated geology of Paleozoic sediments. The valley portion includes a Pliocene lake bed.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: During the inventory phase of the wilderness review process, the boundaries were drawn so as to exclude all noticeable imprints of man, leaving an area that is in a "substantially natural" condition, most of it in a nearly pristine condition. Unnatural features within the area are few, but include several cherrystemmed roads, ways, range developments (springs and fences), and a partly developed 40-acre parcel of private land at Buster Spring. For the most part, these are peripheral impacts, and are so few and so overwhelmed by the immensity of the area that they are unnoticeable.

On the north end, the Mount Wilson Seeding is a disputable feature. This large burn was seeded with a mixture of grasses, some of which are not indigenous to the area. However, the method of seeding used (aerial distribution) and the use of a seed mixture -- along with the passage of time, the maturation of the seeding, and the return of shrub species -- has resulted in an area that appears natural.

The core of the study area is almost entirely free of any influence of man.

The difficulty of access is the main reason that much of the area is in such a natural condition.

Neither man nor livestock has had an impact on the high country around Parsnip Peak. Vegetation is in a nearly pristine condition and includes some unusual features, such as a ponderosa pine/gambel oak stand and a ponderosa pine/aspen stand. Deer, raptors, bobcats, mountain lions, and an occasional antelope are among the animal species present.

Solitude: Outstanding opportunities for solitude are available in this WSA due to its large size, generally dense vegetative cover, and the excellent topographic screening provided by a section of the Wilson Creek Mountain Range with both good width and length. Numerous peaks, several large rock outcrops, and several deep and extensive washes provide excellent and interesting screening. Many secluded places exist where a user can disassociate himself from all sights and sounds of man. Opportunities are truly outstanding.

Opportunities for solitude are much lower in the southern portion of the WSA where the land is flat and the predominant vegetation is sagebrush.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Good opportunities for many types of recreation exist in the Parsnip Peak WSA, and this diversity is outstanding. Types of recreation include backpacking, hiking, camping, horseback riding, nature study, archaeological and geological sightseeing, rock climbing, hunting (deer, sage grouse, blue grouse, and mountain lion), and trapping. The primitive and semi-primitive backcountry setting of the WSA, along with the outstanding scenery of the area, enhance all of these opportunities. Other enhancing characteristics include several springs and streams, a diversity of wildlife, and varied vegetation that ranges from open, grassy areas to ponderosa and aspen stands to dense pinyon-juniper communities.

Special Features: Several special features of note exist in the WSA. Among these is the area's high scenic value, most spectacular in the autumn when large areas are aflame with the yellow foliage of aspens. Aspen, though not unusual in the mountains of Nevada, represent only a fraction of 1 percent of the forested land, so the occurrence of so many aspen in one location is highly unusual. Several large rock outcrops of Tertiary volcanic origin also contribute to the scenic values, which are among the highest in east-central Nevada.

PARSNIP PEAK

Another special feature of the area is the abundance of archaeological artifacts scattered throughout. Enough is known about these in the north end of the WSA that a Mount Wilson Archaeological District has been delineated and is a candidate for nomination for National Register status. The resource is largely unknown throughout the remainder of the WSA, but uncorroborated reports along with the known resource offer compelling opportunities for research and discovery.

Ponderosa pines occur in several stands in the WSA. These trees are unusual in this part of Nevada, occurring only in areas between about 7,500 and 8,500 feet. They are a special attraction for recreationists, add scenic diversity of the area, and serve as a seed source and a source of genetic diversity for the species.

In the south of the WSA is an Apache tears rockhounding area (Apache tears are spherical pieces of obsidian, a volcanic glass).

Mineral Resources

The nearest mining district is 10 miles southwest of the study area. Most of the mining activity within the study area consisted of assessment work on two groups of claims, the Blue Rock placer claims for perlite and the Gold Tower lode claims in faulted jasperoid. The Parsnip Peak WSA has moderate potential for mineral resources (GEM, 1983). Two areas totalling 3,350 acres within the WSA have high potential for nonmetallic perlite deposits. Perlite reserves of the Hollinger deposit on the west boundary of the WSA contains 9 million tons of inferred reserves. Another deposit near the southeast edge of the WSA contains an additional estimated 1.5 million tons of perlite reserves (GEM, 1983).

The economic value of perlite, a volcanic glass used in concrete and plaster, is questionable at this location. Located so far from markets and processing plants, this deposit is currently subeconomic, and will likely continue to be so since vast deposits in New Mexico and Arizona supply most of the national need, and will not be depleted in the foreseeable future.

As of 1983, a total of 34 claims existed within the WSA. (Refer to the Mineral and Energy Potential, and the Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Maps.)

Energy Resources

The Parsnip Peak WSA has been rated as having low potential for oil and gas (GEM, 1983).

Springs are abundant in the study area, especially along faults, but their temperatures are low, ranging from 50°F to 75°F. The resource potential for geothermal energy is therefore low. (GEM, 1983.)

As of 1983, nearly all of the WSA was leased for oil and gas. (Refer to the Mineral and Energy Potential, and Mining Claims/Mineral Leasing Maps.)

Livestock Grazing

The entire study area falls within the Wilson Creek Allotment. Refer to Appendix C for additional information. The Wilson Creek Allotment is an "I", Improve, category which means that projects proposed within this allotment have a high priority. The allotment is grazed only by cattle. Grazing quality varies from poor in most rugged thickly vegetated areas to very good in the 1974 Wilson Burn area on the north end.

Only the Wilson Seeding and the seeding fence occur within the study area boundary. Other range developments consisting of two pipelines, one fence, and one spring development have been cherrystemmed out of the WSA. (Refer to the Range Development Map.)

Woodland Resources

The Parsnip Peak WSA contains 5.4 percent of the manageable woodland of the Schell Resource Area. The area is used by residents of Pioche and surrounding ranches for fuelwood and Christmas tree cutting. It is also within the demand range of commercial Christmas tree cutters in Las Vegas. The Wilson Burn in the northern portion of the study area contains considerable standing timber that is easily accessible and harvestable, although its commercial value will be lost in about 5 years due to rot. Commercial pine nut collecting also occurs in the area.

Wildlife Resources

The study area includes about 15,000 acres of key deer summer range, and about 62,000 acres of important mountain lion range. The deer herd in this area has declined 80 percent in the last 10 years. Recently, however, this downward trend seems to have stopped and the deer population may be increasing slightly. This partially due to the encroachment of pinyon and juniper and the resulting loss of habitat. Other species in the area include antelope, raptors, common songbirds, small mammals, and reptiles. About 764 riparian acres are located in this WSA.

Lands and Realty

Five private parcels of land totalling 240 acres lie adjacent to the WSA. The following additional private parcels totalling 320 acres are surrounded by the WSA.

Parcel No. 1, T. 3 N., R. 69 E., sec. 5, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Lincoln County. This 40-acre parcel is owned by Robert Orr, et al. Parsnip Spring is located on the parcel. The spring is an important livestock water. There is a cherrystemmed access route to the parcel.

Parcel No. 2, T. 3 N., R. 69 E., sec. 17, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Lincoln County. This 40-acre parcel contains Buster Spring, an important livestock water. There is a cherrystemmed access route to the parcel.

The following parcels have no vehicular access. All parcels are owned by A. M. Swallow Property.

Parcel No. 3, T. 4 N., R. 68 E., sec. 3, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 4, T. 4 N., R. 68 E., sec. 4, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 5, T. 4 N., R. 68 E., sec. 14, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 80 acres.

Parcel No. 6, T. 4 N., R. 68 E., sec. 25, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

Parcel No. 7, T. 4 N., R. 68 E., sec. 26, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 40 acres.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS WSA NV-040-242

General Environment

The Worthington Mountains WSA is located in a remote part of the Ely BLM District in Lincoln County in south-central Nevada. The nearest paved highway is about 15 miles south, and the nearest incorporated town is Alamo, Nevada. The WSA includes sagebrush-covered portions of Garden and Sand Spring Valleys, as well as the Worthington Mountain Range where forest cover varies from none to dense stands of pinyon and juniper, bristlecone and ponderosa pine. Scattered along the benchlands and ranging into the mountains are plant species typical of the Sonoran Desert, including cholla cactus. Wildlife species include deer, cougars, bighorn sheep, kit foxes, coyotes and raptors, as well as smaller common mammal and reptile species. Water in the WSA is very scarce.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: The naturalness of the mountainous portion of this WSA has been maintained due to the extremely rugged nature of the mountain range and its remoteness from human populations. The east bench is totally free of manmade features except for three ways created solely by the passage of vehicles. These ways are associated with livestock grazing.

Disturbances associated with mining in the Freiburg area at the north end of the WSA have been excluded. The more open west bench carries several imprints of man. Pipelines, a fenceline, and several roads and ways are associated with livestock grazing. The impact of these developments does not affect the natural appearance of most of the bench, but does significantly affect portions due to the straight-line construction of the structures and the lack of good screening on the sloping, low sage-covered bench.

Solitude: In an area such as the Worthington Mountains, an individual obviously may find solitude. The size of the area and the many side canyons contribute to opportunities for solitude. Although the configuration of the WSA is several miles broad, the mountain range itself is a single narrow ridge. Excellent screening is provided by the topography of the mountains, but in most cases vegetation is sparse. Most wilderness use would tend to center around Leviathan Cave, since most people who commit the time and effort to visit the area would wish to see its best known feature. Because of the current low visitor use, however, the visitor is unlikely to meet others even at this popular destination point.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for recreation exist in the Worthington Mountains WSA. Leviathan Cave by itself provides outstanding opportunities for spelunking. The numerous different aspects of the cave challenge the senses of the first-time visitor, who usually comprehends the enormity of it only after his visit is over. Many different cave features await the visitor, ranging from easy walk-in caverns to narrow crawl spaces to difficult technical climbs. The photographer has no end of subjects in the many cave decorations. The arduous climb to the cave from the base of the mountain is itself an adventure which forms an integral part of the experience of the cave.

Wilderness areas are intended for the enjoyment of everyone, and if designated, this area would be no different. Of course, all wilderness users are well-advised to prepare themselves physically and mentally for their visits. This advice is especially applicable to anyone who visits the Worthington Mountains. The nearly vertical rise of the landform, the extremely rocky, craggy mountains, the absence of water, and the remoteness of the area provide additional high quality opportunities for hiking, nature study, backpacking, camping, rock climbing, and photography. The very characteristics which create such opportunities, however, also create the degree of difficulty for which the area is well-known. Backpacking in the mountains is extremely difficult, at times dangerous. Camping on or near the ridgeline can be exhilarating because of the "top-of-the-world" feeling that accompanies the experience, but it is also difficult to locate a level campsite anywhere. The lack of water also affects the comfort and convenience of the experience. Hiking is an adventure in exploration: every rock face holds promise of an undiscovered cave, and every cave and rockshelter holds promise of some undiscovered relic of prehistoric habitation. Hiking also has its hazards, one's egress from the area through an unexplored canyon may suddenly be blocked by an unscaleable rock cascade. All of this is to explain that the recreation opportunities are mostly for rugged, difficult forms of recreation. Nonetheless, when taken together with the special opportunities provided by Leviathan Cave, these are outstanding.

The lower slopes of the WSA offers recreation opportunities of a much lower quality than the rugged core area. Because it is unforested and relatively featureless, the west bench exists more as a barrier to be crossed to achieve access to the mountains rather than as a destination itself.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Special Features: There are three known caves more than 100 feet deep in the extensive Timestone depositions of the WSA. Leviathan Cave, already described, is the largest of these. Jinx and Lavender Caves are much smaller and are located in the same part of the mountain range as is Leviathan Cave. The potential for additional caves is very high.

Bristlecone pines are well-known as one of the longest living species. They occur in the higher elevations of the Worthington Mountains WSA, widely and sparsely scattered over at least 2,000 acres. Among those which have been dated in the area, the oldest is over 2,100 years old.

Although the WSA has never undergone an archaeological inventory, several prehistoric human artifacts have been reported. Among these are an Indian sandal, a metate, and a hunting blind. Two wickiups were reported to have existed inside Leviathan Cave in the 1960's, but these were apparently scavenged for firewood. Potential for other archaeological finds is good. Fossil material occurs in abundance along the ridgeline. Only common invertebrate specimens have been found.

Scattered ponderosa pines occur in the north end of the WSA. Ponderosa pines are not an unusual species, but their occurrence in this part of Nevada is noteworthy. They, therefore, serve as a special feature of the WSA.

Mineral Resources

There is moderate mineral resource potential totalling 3,400 acres for undiscovered resources of copper, lead, zinc, and silver. The mineral resource potential of the remaining 44,200 acres of the WSA is low for metallic minerals. Mining in the Worthington Mountains WSA has been restricted to the Freiburg Mining District which has seen limited production of silver-lead-zinc-copper ore since the 1870's. (GEM, 1983.)

Mining claims were held in four sections in the mountains adjacent to the Freiburg Mine on the north end. As of August 1983, a total of 68 claims existed within the WSA. (Refer to the Mineral and Energy Potential, and the Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Map.)

Energy Resources

Oil and gas potential within the Worthington Mountains WSA is rated as low (GEM, 1983). As of 1983, most of the west and northeast portions of the WSA were leased for oil and gas. Exploration or development work has not taken place within the WSA. Geothermal resource potential is considered to be low for the WSA (GEM, 1983).

Livestock Grazing

Cattle and sheep are currently grazed on the east and west benches of the WSA in portions of four allotments that occur on the WSA; Worthington Mountain, McCutchen Springs, Sand Springs, and Crescent. Grazing quality within the WSA is rated as poor to fair.

Existing range developments within the WSA include: 3 miles of an allotment boundary fence on the northwest side of the WSA, the Freiburg Well, a spring development at Stink Bug Spring, and a spring development at Wild Horse Spring, with 4.5 miles of associated pipelines. Two reservoirs lie along one of the pipelines. Additionally, a trough and approximately 2.5 miles of pipeline enter the WSA in the north from an existing development outside the area. (Refer to the Range Development Map.)

Woodland Resources

The WSA possesses 0.2 percent of the manageable woodland in the Schell Resource Area. The Worthington Mountains are not suited for woodland production.

Recreation Values

Leviathan Cave is the main recreational point of interest for the Worthington Mountains WSA.

Wildlife Resources

Although there is no key wildlife range identified within the Worthington Mountains WSA deer, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, and kit foxes are some of the species found in the area. The Nevada Department of Wildlife is interested in supplementing the existing population of bighorn sheep within the WSA.

Lands and Realty

No private land exists within the WSA. Patented mining claims exist along the north boundary.

The Worthington Mountains are geographically situated so that they could serve as a link in a radio communication system. The unit lies within a military operations area and the military has expressed some interest in the area for communication sites.

WEEPAH SPRING WSA
NV-040-246

General Environment

The Weepah Spring WSA is located in Lincoln County in east-central Nevada. This WSA is situated in the Seaman Range, about 120 miles north of Las Vegas, and 90 miles south of Ely, Nevada.

The Weepah Spring WSA is representative of the region in several ways. First, it is a mountain range formed by the uplifting and thrust faulting of Paleozoic sediments, subsequent covering by volcanic materials, and finally more faulting. Second, the vegetation, much like that in other surrounding areas, includes pinyon pine and juniper in the mountains, sagebrush and other shrubs and grasses typical of east-central Nevada at lower elevations. Wildlife includes mule deer, eagles, other raptors, and smaller mammals and reptiles commonly found in the Great Basin.

While representative, the Weepah Spring WSA is extraordinary in a number of ways. A large stand of ponderosa pine, atypical in eastern Nevada, occurs high in the central part of the mountain range, remote and invisible from any part of the WSA boundary. Unusual rock outcrops and other features of geologic interest (including a large arch) abound in the area. Archaeological values, both known and projected, are high. Vegetation in the area includes native grasses, ungrazed by livestock. All of these qualities make the area unique.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Nearly all of the WSA is in a pristine condition, with a few minor exceptions. Two small spring facilities lie within the WSA at Weepah and White Rock Springs. Cherrystemmed routes, primitive in nature, penetrate the boundary of the WSA on the southeast. All of these unnatural features are minor, peripheral, and do not affect in any way the outstanding naturalness of the area as a whole.

Solitude: Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist in abundance in the the Weepah Spring WSA. The large size of the area, its remoteness from populations, and its excellent topographic and vegetative screening all contribute to an environment where the visitor can totally remove himself from the sights and sounds of man. The massiveness of the landform and its maze-like quality most contribute to these opportunities. Within this setting, many individuals or parties could simultaneously experience solitude without interference from other users.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for recreation in the WSA are very good. Features of the area that enhance recreation opportunities include the large ponderosa stand which is most attractive for backpackers and campers; large level rock outcrops, also attractive for such users; other rock outcrops with unusual weathering, including at least one

large natural arch; a large number of nesting raptors, in particular golden eagles; and relatively large areas of ungrazed native vegetation. The expansive scenery of the WSA enhances all opportunities for recreation. Large vistas of impressive landform are visible both within and outside of the WSA in spite of the enclosed nature of many portions. The colors of the area -- dark brown, red, and bright white rock outcrops, dark green and light green vegetation -- create more than ordinary contrasts.

Specific opportunities for recreation include the aforementioned ones for backpacking, hiking, and camping. Nature study in this undisturbed, unusual area is excellent. Horseback riding in the more open southern part of the WSA is very good. Hunting and trapping opportunities occur in various portions of the area.

Recreation opportunities are best in the center of the WSA in the ponderosa forest. They generally remain high in the mountainous portions, and are less in the bench and valley areas.

Special Features: Several special features make the Weepah Spring WSA an unusual area, as noted above. The large stand of ponderosa pine is probably the most remarkable of these. At elevations between 7,000 and 8,000 feet and covering 600 acres or more, this stand is an area where the unrestrained interplay of natural forces is highly apparent. Fallen, charred timber evidences the historic and essential role of fire in this ecosystem. The regeneration of the ponderosa is obvious where young saplings grow next to trees 3 feet and more in diameter. Most of the older trees have been struck by lightning and, as a result, are crownless. Many trees display lightning scars that spiral around the trunks from top to bottom, again exhibiting the interplay of natural forces. As perhaps the largest stand of ponderosa in eastern Nevada, as a source of genetic diversity and as a seed source, this area serves as a special feature with scientific, scenic, and educational value that enhances the area's wilderness value.

The Weepah Spring WSA contains a wealth of archaeological values, including petroglyphs. The area was traditionally used until modern times (circa 1930's) as a pine nut gathering area. The southernmost part of the WSA includes about 1,000 acres of the White River Narrows National Register Archaeological District. Archaeological values, known and suspected, contribute as special features to the enhancement of the area's wilderness values.

The Seaman Range wild horse herd, numbering 84 head, range into the WSA along its western side and into the southern end. For many persons, especially those who would use the area for wilderness recreation, wild horses are "living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the west" and "... they contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people" (from the Wild Horse and Burro Act, 1971). The presence of these animals, then, is appropriately identified as a special feature of the area.

WEEPAH SPRING

The scenic values of the Seaman Range are, as noted above, high due to its great diversity of features, especially its geologic features. These, too, serve as a special feature of the WSA.

Mineral Resources

The Weepah Spring WSA has moderate potential for metallic mineral resources totalling 7,800 acres in the northwest portion of the WSA. An additional 900 acres of moderate metallic mineral resource potential occurs on the east border of the WSA. The remainder of the Weepah Spring WSA has low potential for mineral resources (GEM, 1983).

The land adjacent to the northeast and northwest boundaries of the WSA has long been the target of mineral exploration, although there has never been any production. There is no generally recognized mining district in or near the WSA. The northwest portion of the WSA has about 388 mining claims and recent interest centers on potential for a disseminated gold deposit. (Refer to the Mineral and Energy potential, and the Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Maps.)

Energy Resources

On the basis of the presence of volcanic rocks, the WSA is considered to have low oil and gas potential and no drilling has occurred in the WSA. (GEM, 1983.) Geothermal resource potential for the WSA is considered to be low (GEM, 1983). (Refer to the Mineral and Energy potential, and the Mining Claims/Mineral Leases Maps.)

Livestock Grazing

Cattle and sheep are grazed primarily along the lower slopes of the WSA. The Weepah Spring WSA includes portions of five grazing allotments. These are the Timber Mountain, Wilson Creek, West Timber Mountain, Oreana Springs, and North Hiko-Six Mile Allotments. Refer to Appendix C for additional Information. The grazing quality for cattle is generally poor due to rugged terrain and low forage desirability. Forage desirability for sheep is fair, but grazing is still limited by terrain and absence of perennial water.

Existing range developments within the WSA include: an old development and 1.25 miles of associated pipeline, a spring development at White Rock Spring with 1 mile of pipeline, and .25 miles of fence near Oreana Canyon. (Refer to the Range Development Map.)

Woodland Resources

The Weepah Spring WSA contains 1.1 percent of manageable woodland in the Schell Resource Area. The ponderosa forest (600 acres) is a significant, noneconomic, botanical resource. It serves as a seed source, and as a reservoir of genetic diversity.

Recreation Values

Recreational interest in the Weepah Spring WSA centers around the numerous aboriginal petroglyph sites located throughout the WSA. The majority of petroglyphs are found in the southern portion of the WSA within the White River Narrows Archaeological District.

Wildlife Resources

No key wildlife range has been identified in this study area. However it is important to wildlife. Peregrine falcons have been sighted here in the past. This WSA contains some of the best falcon nesting habitat in the Schell Resource Area. (San Stiver, NDOW 1980 Personal Communication.) Other species of wildlife include deer, raptors (including several golden eagles), small mammals, and songbirds. The Nevada Department of Wildlife has plans to reintroduce desert bighorn sheep and antelope into the area.

Threatened and Endangered Species

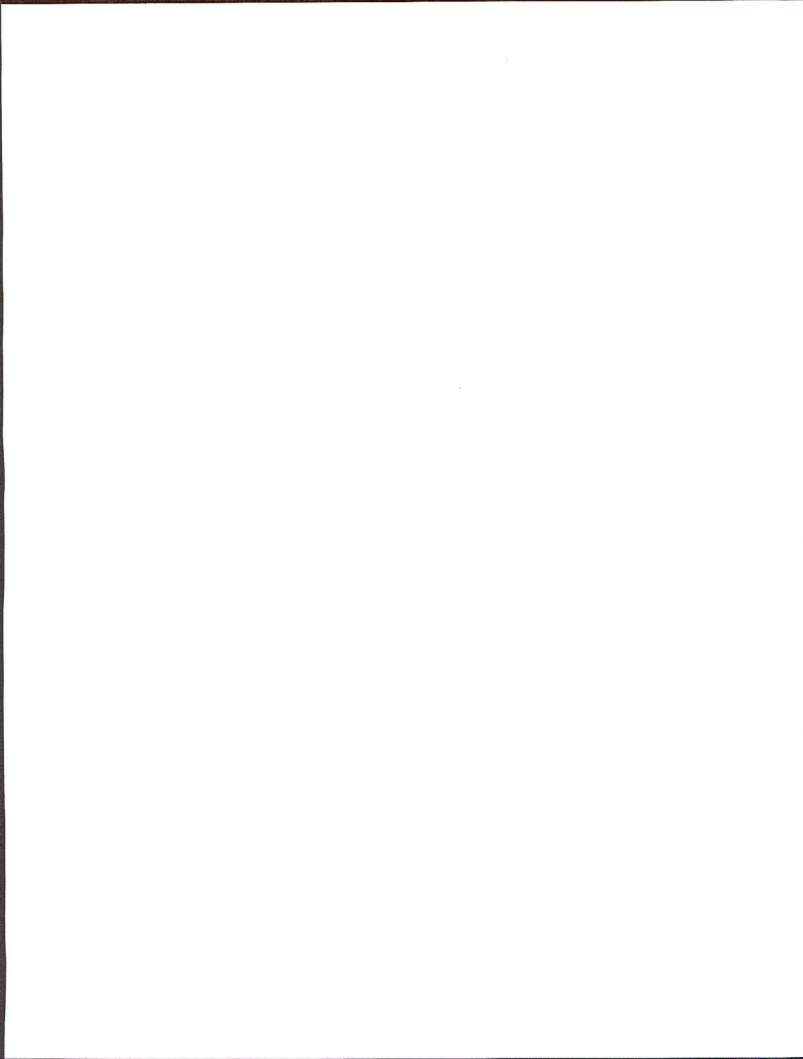
Two plant species identified by the State of Nevada as sensitive (category 3C) are found in the Weepah Spring WSA. These are the MacBride phacelia (*Phacelia anelsonii*) and the Red Canyon phlox (*Phlox gladiiformis*). Refer to Appendix D for additional information.

Lands and Realty

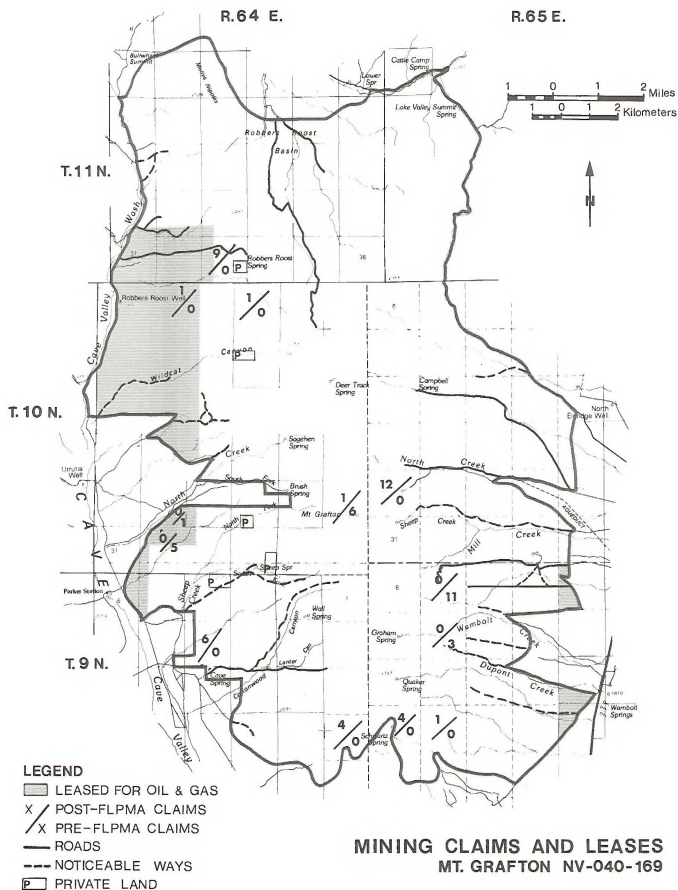
No private land exists within or adjacent to the study area. The higher peaks in the WSA have some potential for communication facilities.



WSA MAPS SECTION



Mount Grafton WSA Maps



Far South Egans WSA Maps

R.63E.

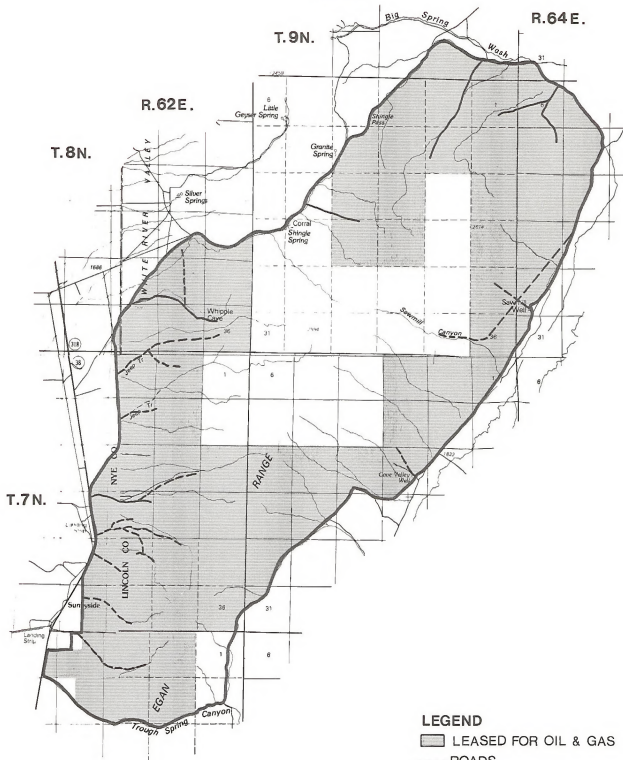
R.64E.

T.9N.

R.62E.

T.8N.

T.7N.

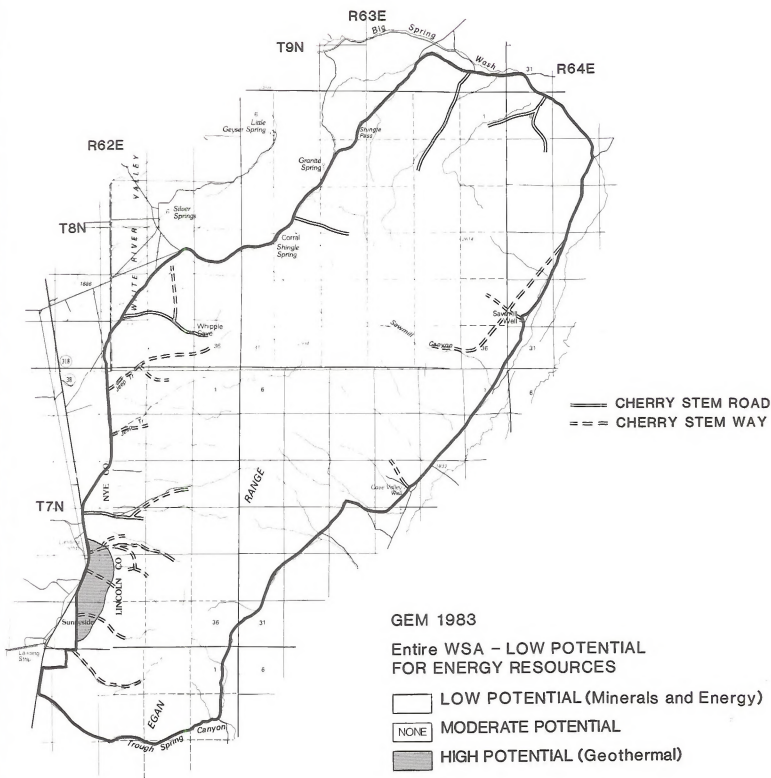


LEGEND

- LEASED FOR OIL & GAS
- ROADS
- NOTICEABLE WAYS

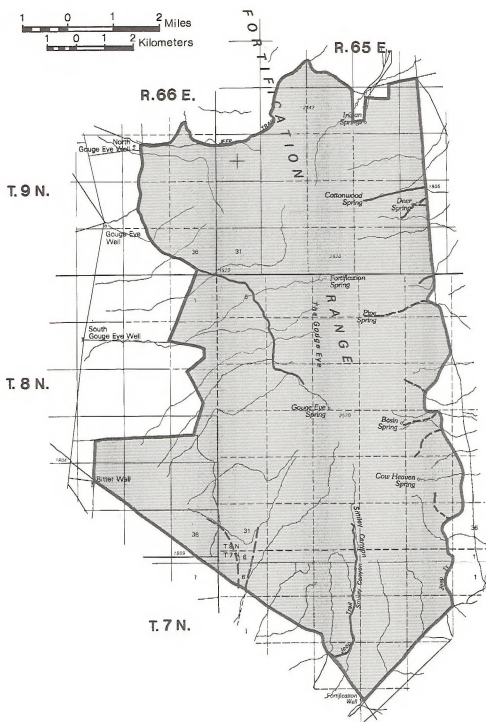
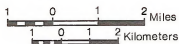


**MINING CLAIMS AND LEASES
FAR SOUTH EGANS NV-040-172**



MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
 NV-040-172 FAR SOUTH EGANS

Fortification Range WSA Maps



LEGEND

LEASED FOR OIL & GAS

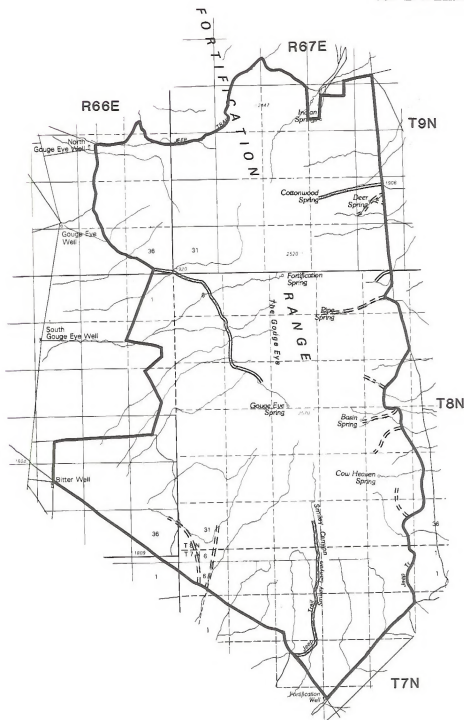
ROADS

NOTICEABLE WAYS

**MINING CLAIMS AND LEASES
FORTIFICATION RANGE NV-040-177**



1 0 1 2 Miles



GEM 1983

☐ LOW POTENTIAL (Minerals and Energy)

☐ NONE MODERATE POTENTIAL

☐ NONE HIGH POTENTIAL

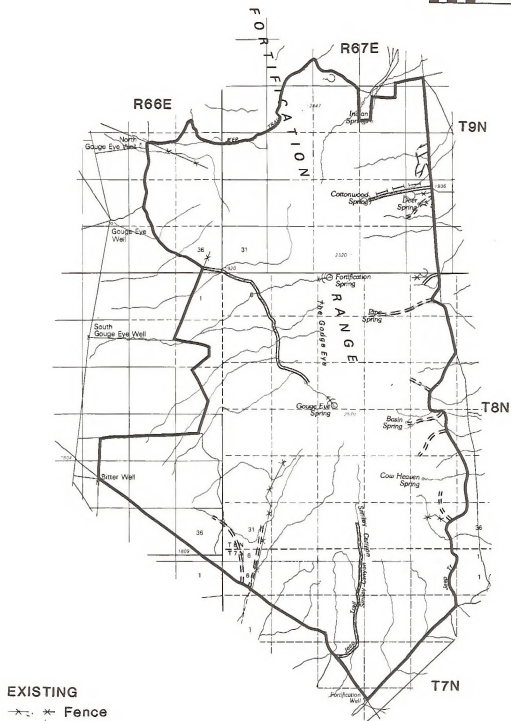
== CHERRY STEM ROAD

- - - CHERRY STEM WAY

MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
NV-040-177 FORTIFICATION RANGE



1 0 1 2 Miles



EXISTING

- *—*— Fence
- |—|— Pipeline
- Spring Development
- ~— Corral
- ▨ Vegetation Conversion

PROPOSED

None

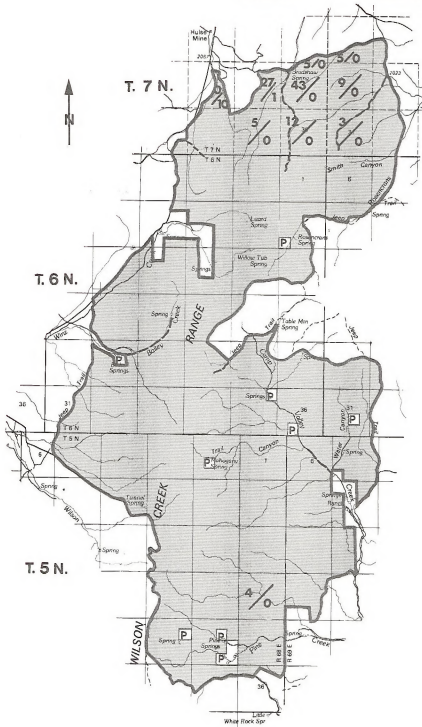
== CHERRY STEM ROAD

== CHERRY STEM WAY

RANGE PROJECTS
NV-040-177 FORTIFICATION RANGE

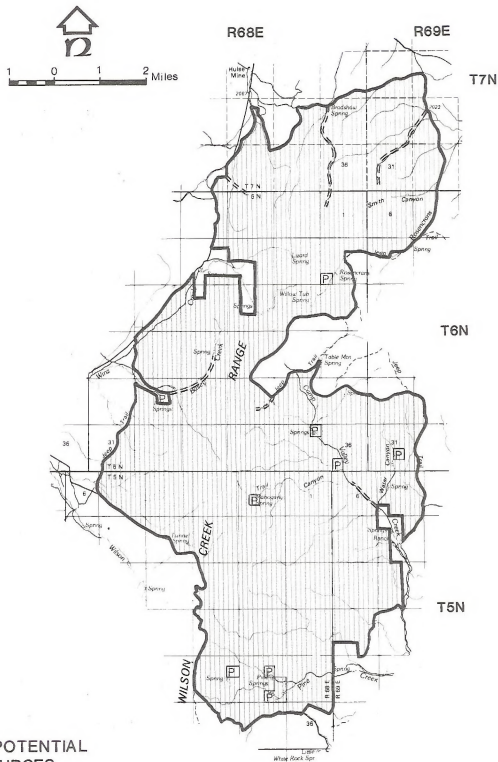
Table Mountain WSA Maps

R.69 E.



☐ LEASED FOR OIL & GAS
 X / POST-FLPMA CLAIMS
 / X PRE-FLPMA CLAIMS
 — ROADS
 --- NOTICEABLE WAYS
☐ PRIVATE LAND

MINING CLAIMS AND LEASES
TABLE MOUNTAIN NV-040-197

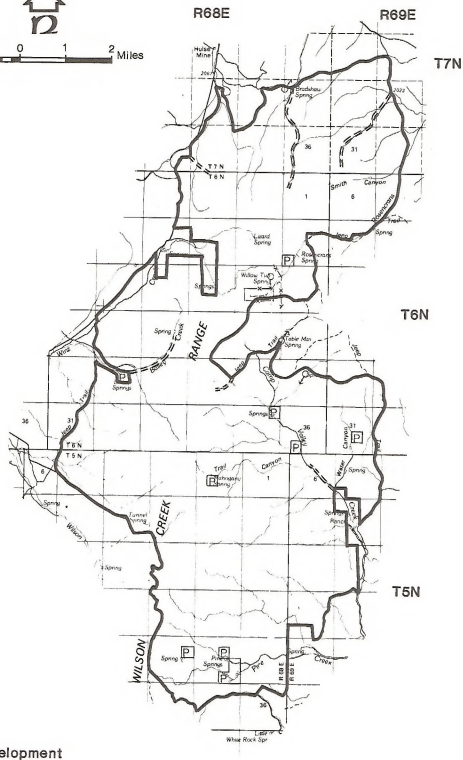
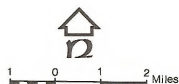


GEM 1983

Entire WSA - LOW POTENTIAL
FOR ENERGY RESOURCES

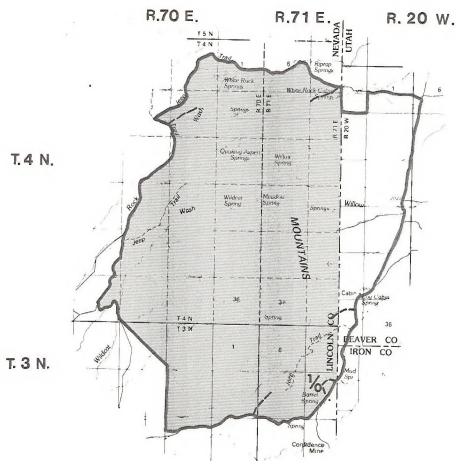
- ☐ NONE LOW POTENTIAL
- ☐ MODERATE POTENTIAL (Metallic minerals)
- ☐ NONE HIGH POTENTIAL
- CHERRY STEM ROAD
- === CHERRY STEM WAY

MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
NV-040-197 TABLE MOUNTAIN








==== CHERRY STEM ROAD
 ==== CHERRY STEM WAY

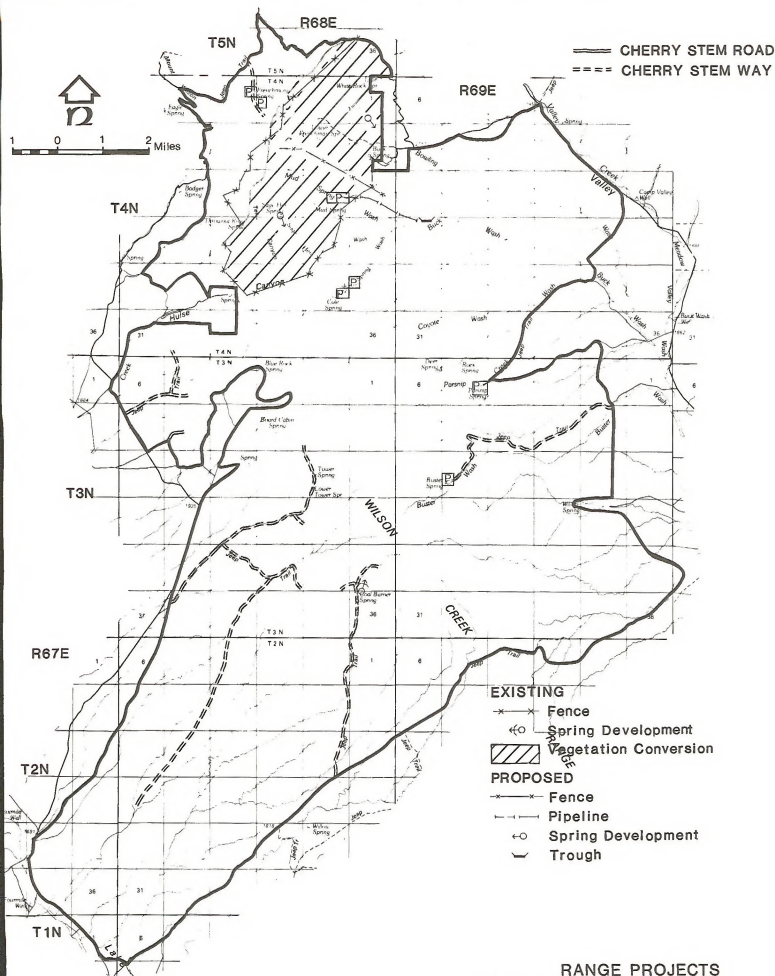
White Rock Range WSA Maps



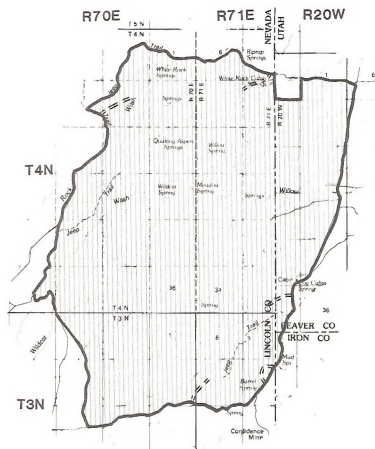
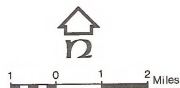
LEGEND

-  LEASED FOR OIL & GAS
-  POST-FLPMA CLAIMS
-  PRE-FLPMA CLAIMS
-  ROADS
-  NOTICEABLE WAYS

MINING CLAIMS AND LEASES
WHITE ROCK RANGE NV-040-202



RANGE PROJECTS
NV-040-206 PARSNIP PEAK



GEM 1983


Entire WSA - LOW POTENTIAL
FOR ENERGY RESOURCES

 NONE LOW POTENTIAL

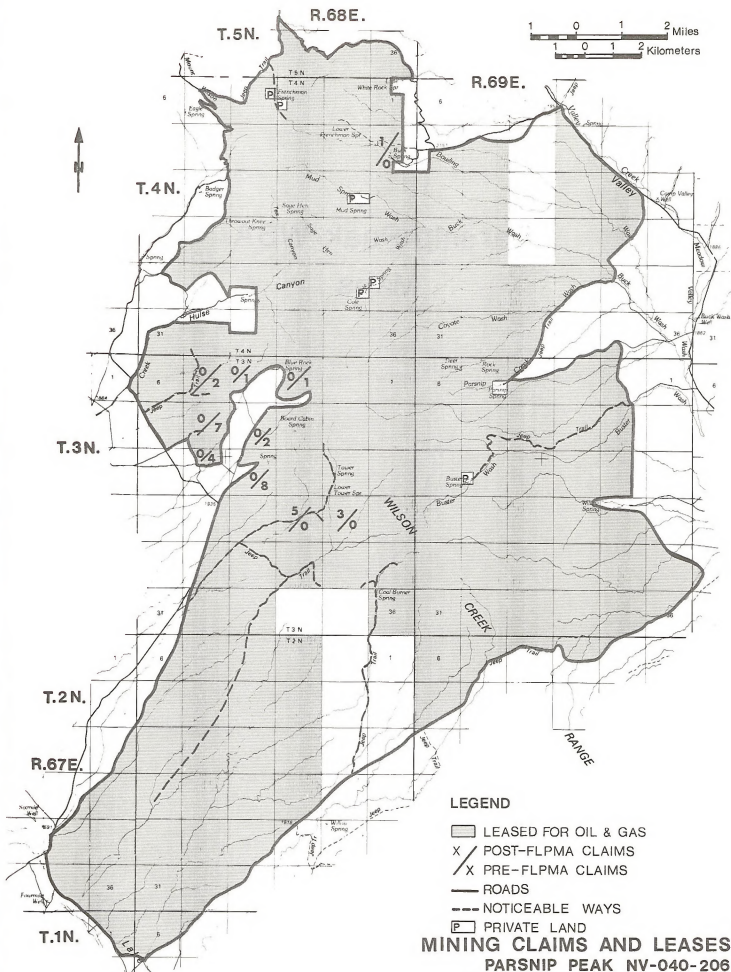
 MODERATE POTENTIAL (Metallic minerals)

 NONE HIGH POTENTIAL

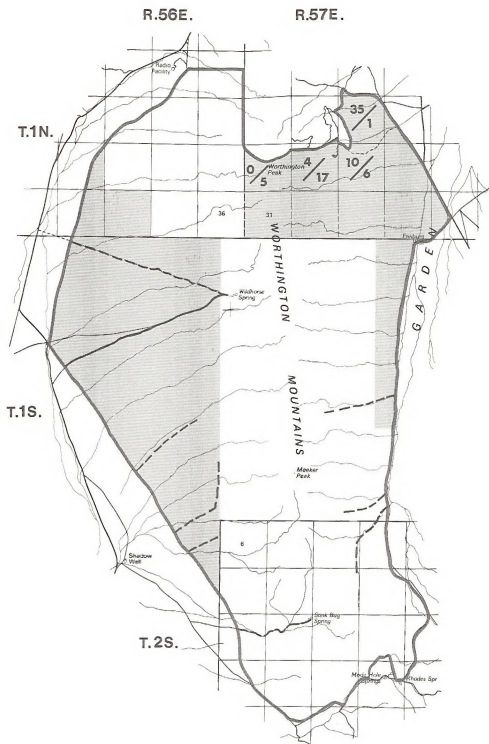
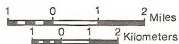
 CHERRY STEM ROAD

 CHERRY STEM WAY

MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
NV-040-202 WHITE ROCK RANGE



Worthington Mountains WSA Maps



LEGEND

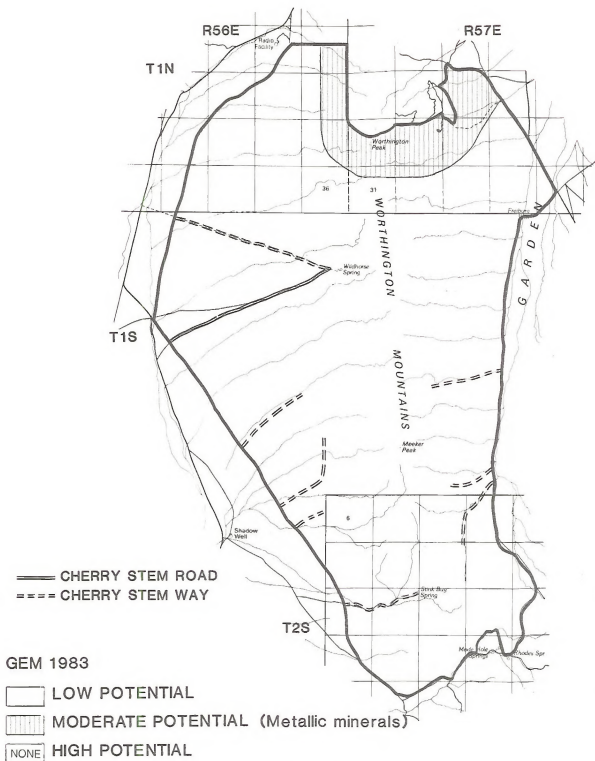
- LEASED FOR OIL & GAS
- POST-FLPMA CLAIMS
- PRE-FLPMA CLAIMS

- ROADS
- NOTICEABLE WAYS

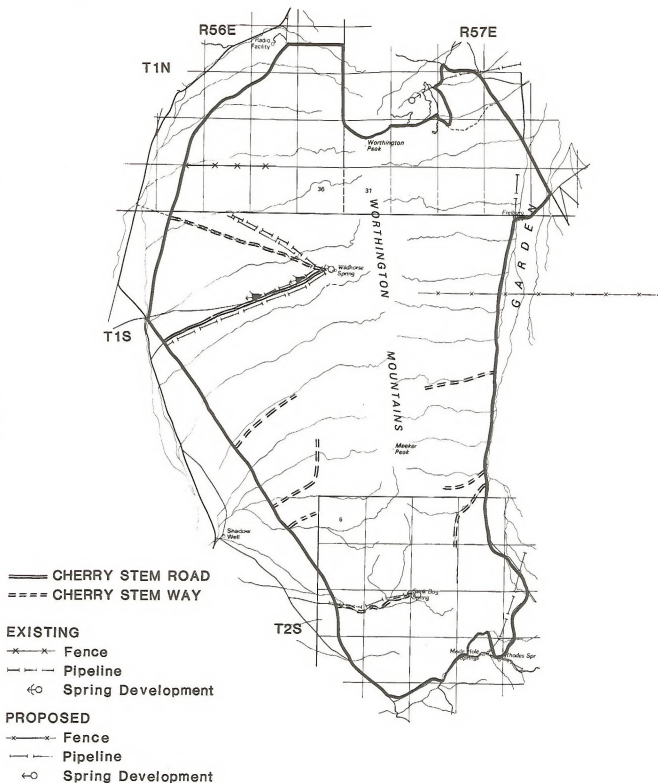
MINING CLAIMS AND LEASES
WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS NV-040-242



1 0 1 2 Miles

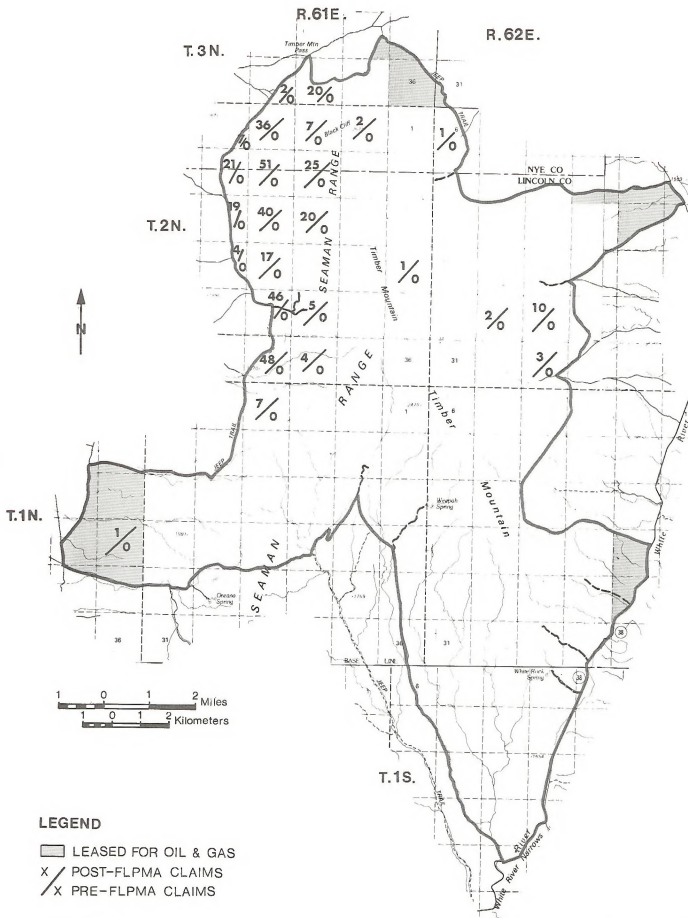


MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
NV-040-242 WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS



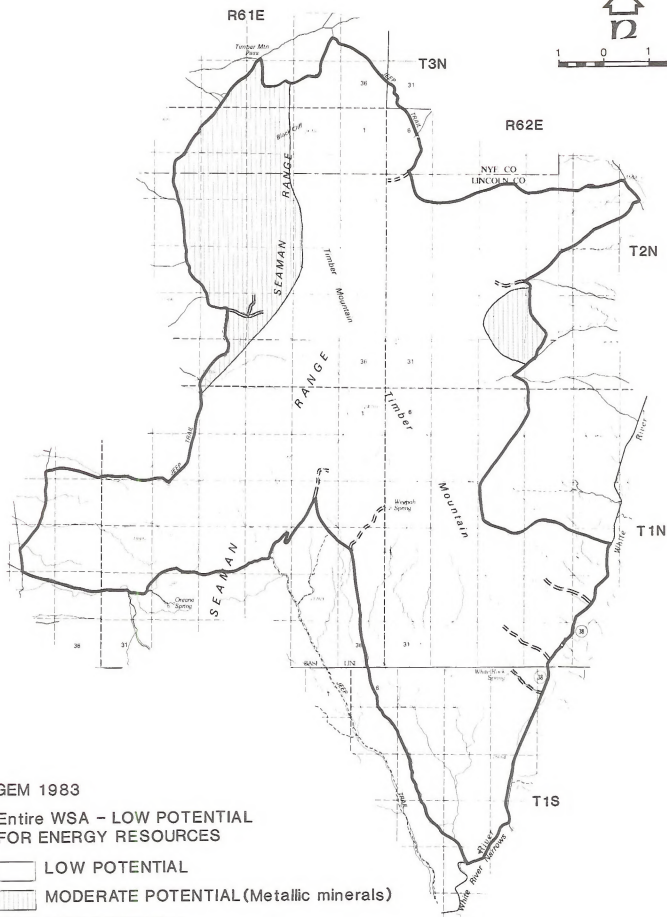
RANGE PROJECTS
 NV-040-242 WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Weepah Spring WSA Maps










1 0 1 2 Miles



GEM 1983

Entire WSA - LOW POTENTIAL
FOR ENERGY RESOURCES

-  LOW POTENTIAL
 MODERATE POTENTIAL (Metallic minerals)
 HIGH POTENTIAL

-  CHERRY STEM ROAD
 CHERRY STEM WAY

MINERAL AND ENERGY POTENTIAL
NV-040-246 WEEPAH SPRING

R61E



1 0 1 2 Miles

T3N

R62E

NYE CO
LINCOLN CO

T2N

T1N

T1S

EXISTING

- Fence
 Spring Development

PROPOSED

- Fence
 Pipeline
 Trough
 Vegetation Conversion

CHERRY STEM ROAD
 CHERRY STEM WAY

RANGE PROJECTS
NV-040-246 WEEPAH SPRING

CHAPTER 4

Environmental Consequences

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental consequences of implementing the different wilderness alternatives. The impacts are summarized in Tables 4-11 in Chapter 2. Only the required elements and the environmental issues (impact topics) that were identified during scoping are discussed and analyzed in this document. The Scoping section in Chapter 1 contains a list of the impact topics.

A discussion of the adverse impacts which cannot be avoided, the relationship between short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and the irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources can be found following the analysis of each of the proposed actions in this chapter.

MOUNT GRAFTON WSA

NV-040-169

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Proposed Action, 30,115 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 43,101 acres would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities including minimal access construction and small drill pads would physically disturb and impair the natural character on a total of 7 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. Five acres of the disturbance would be located in the southern portion of the WSA and 2 acres on the east side near a previously disturbed area just outside of the WSA boundary. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited due to vegetative and topographic screening, and proximity to existing disturbances within the suitable portion of the WSA. A guzzler for elk and mule deer would minimally affect the naturalness within the north-central portion of the WSA. The presence of the guzzler would be offset by the opportunity for the wilderness user to observe wildlife.

MOUNT GRAFTON

There would be a slight positive effect on naturalness due primarily to the closure of the WSA to vehicles which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Also benefiting naturalness would be the closure of the area to additional mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and woodland product harvest.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities would physically disturb and impair the natural character of a total of 38 acres within the nonsuitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA. Fifteen acres of disturbance would be located on the east side of the WSA, 18 acres would be located in the north-central portion, and a 5-acre exploration program would be located on the west bench of the WSA. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. On the east bench, a 3.5-acre pad for an exploratory oil and gas well and 1.5 miles of access road totalling 5 acres would impair the naturalness values, as would 5 acres (2 miles) of seismic lines along the east bench. The seismic lines would be seen on the bench by the wilderness user as the lines were crossed and from the high country as the user looked directly down on them. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation.

Several of the proposed range developments would affect the area's naturalness only when users were in the immediate vicinity of the developments. These include four short sections of drift fences, two troughs, and two reservoirs. The reservoirs would be more noticeable because of the open nature of the terrain where they are to be constructed. One vegetation conversion totalling 600 acres would also appear unnatural because of the seeding of nonnative species. A 580-acre commercial Christmas tree sale along the east bench would leave stumps scattered through the sale area and would have a slight detrimental effect on the natural character of the area. A total of 1,229 acres of surface disturbance would occur within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The remaining 41,900 acres of the nonsuitable portion would retain their wilderness values.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): The limited use of heavy equipment and other vehicles for mineral exploration on 7 acres would minimally affect the area's solitude. Occasional vehicle use would detract slightly from the feeling of solitude for those visitors close to the 8 miles of cherrystemmed routes within the suitable portion of the WSA. The vehicle use would occur mostly in October during hunting season.

The elimination of additional mineral and energy exploration and possible development, as well as the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): The use of heavy equipment and other vehicles would disturb the area's solitude in the vicinity of the mineral and energy exploration and range project construction. These impacts would be of a relatively short nature and spread through much of the WSA.

Solitude would also be impaired by the sound of chain saws within the Christmas tree cutting area. The sound of chain saws carry a long distance although the impacts would be sporadic and based on the number of Christmas trees the contractor was permitted to remove at one time. Occasional off road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude especially in October during hunting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The impacts described in the solitude and naturalness sections above would also diminish the opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation for the duration of the developments and when the visitor is nearby. Elimination of mineral and energy exploration, as well as woodland product harvest and ORV use, would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of ongoing mineral and energy exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would diminish the opportunity for primitive or unconfined recreation for those visitors in the vicinity of these operations.

Special Features: Many of the area's special features (the bristlecone pine, trout fishery, and scenic qualities) are located within the suitable portion of the WSA and would receive the added protection from tighter restrictions placed on surface-disturbing activities within wilderness areas. All these values would continue to receive protection by the scenic area designation even though they are partially in the nonsuitable portion. The areas were designated scenic areas in recognition of these special features.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 41,900 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 30,115-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 18,500 acres of moderate potential and 5,000 acres of high potential for low-grade metallic minerals. The remainder of the area is identified as having a low potential for these resources. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include access and

drill pad construction. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 20 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration would be reduced to 7 acres due to tighter wilderness restrictions should the suitable portion be designated as wilderness.

All lands within the 43,101-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 15,500 acres of moderate potential and 7,000 acres of high mineral potential for low-grade metallic minerals. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 20 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 7 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 30,115-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The Mount Grafton WSA has been rated to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) (GEM, 1983).

All lands within the 43,101-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Actual development of energy resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within the Mount Grafton WSA would not change. The proposed riparian fencing and elk guzzler would be allowed following criteria in the Wilderness Management Policy. The two areas (600 acres) identified for vegetation conversion could occur by limited suppression of wildfires if consistent with the fire management plan prepared for the wilderness area. If seeding is required, only native species would be allowed.

The remaining proposed projects are in the nonsuitable area and would be built and maintained with no wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.

Impacts on Woodland Product Harvest

The 30,115-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland products. The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas tree every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 43,101-acre nonsuitable portion would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 580-acre commercial Christmas tree sale and the commercial sale of pinyon pine nuts.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every six years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Proposed Action would close 30,115 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 8 miles of cherrystemmed routes would still provide vehicular access into the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational group affected since little other off-road use occurs. The nonsuitable portion of the WSA which will remain open to ORV use can absorb the foregone ORV use in the suitable area.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.

MOUNT GRAFTON

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 30,115 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the suitable portion to all forms of mineral entry and leasing.

On the 43,101 acres designated as nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values by mineral and energy exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved notices of intent, plans of operation, and environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 30,115 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 43,101 acres designated as nonwilderness, all present uses would continue. Mineral and energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values in the long term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 30,115 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is not expected except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 43,101 acres designated as nonwilderness, mineral and energy exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative 73,216 acres would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities, including minimal access construction and small drill pads, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 20 acres within the Mount Grafton WSA. This disturbance would be spread over four areas: 9 acres in the south, 3 acres in the east, 6 acres in the north-central portion, and 2 acres on the west bench. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited due to vegetative and topographic screening and the close proximity to existing disturbances within the WSA.

On the east bench of the WSA, a 4-acre exploratory oil and gas well pad and access route would impair naturalness values. Mitigating measures in the plans of operation and the notice of intent to drill would minimize impacts to the wilderness resource and would require reclamation efforts to restore the area to a natural appearance. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation.

The troughs and drift fence would be designed to blend with the surrounding area and would detract from the area's naturalness only when a visitor was near the projects. The 1.5 miles of lodgepole pine fence surrounding a riparian area would somewhat impair the feeling of naturalness but this would be offset by the presence of a protected riparian area which would not otherwise occur due to grazing pressure. A guzzler for elk and mule deer would slightly detract from the area's naturalness, but the increased chance for observing wildlife would compensate for this.

A slight, positive effect on naturalness would occur with the closure of the WSA to vehicles. This action would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Also benefiting naturalness would be the closure of the area to additional mineral exploration and possible development, and woodland product harvest.

Solitude: The use of heavy equipment and its associated traffic for mineral exploration would minimally effect the area's solitude because of the limited nature of the activity (18 acres). In addition, such activity would be dispersed throughout much of the area and occur at different times.

Occasional off road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors close to the boundary roads or the 50 miles of cherrystemmed routes, especially in October during hunting season.

The elimination of additional mineral and energy exploration and possible development, as well as the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use, would have a positive effect on solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of mineral and energy exploration and occasional ORV use along the cherrystemmed routes would slightly detract from the enjoyment of a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The elimination of additional mineral and energy exploration and other disturbing activities would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features: The area's special features would remain protected under this alternative. They would receive the added protection from tighter restrictions placed on surface-disturbing activities within wilderness.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities, bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values would be preserved.

MOUNT GRAFTON

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 73,216-acre Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 34,000 acres of moderate potential located in the central portion of the WSA and 12,000 acres of high potential in the southern portion. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 58 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 20 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 58 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 20 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 73,216-acre Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil and gas and geothermal)(GEM, 1983). One exploratory oil well and 2.5 miles of vibroseis line that would occur without wilderness designation would be foregone due to tighter wilderness restrictions and the absence of oil and gas leases.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 2.5 miles of vibroseis line would be foregone due to tighter wilderness restrictions and absence of oil and gas leases. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within the Mount Grafton WSA would not change. The construction of the 1.5 mile riparian fence and the trough placement would not be affected. The 5 miles of drift fences would be constructed without the use of motor vehicles. The elk guzzler would be redesigned so it would meet the criteria in the Wilderness Management Policy. The two areas identified for vegetation conversion could occur by limited suppression of wildfires, consistent with the fire management plan prepared for the wilderness area. If seeding is required only native species would be used. It is unlikely that the two proposed reservoirs would be allowed.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and only minor impacts to new projects.

Impacts on Woodland Product Harvest

The entire 73,216-acre Mount Grafton WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The commercial Christmas tree harvest within the 600-acre designated area of 1,800 trees every 6 years would be foregone. In addition, both a commercial fuelwood sale within a 500-acre area proposed for vegetation treatment in the Robber's Roost Basin and commercial pinyon nut harvest would be eliminated.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 1,800 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 73,216-acre Mount Grafton WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and the 50 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 350 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Impacts to Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 43,649 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 29,567 acres would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities (including minimal access construction and small drill pads) would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 13 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. Five acres of the disturbance would be located in the southern portion of the WSA, 2 acres on the east side near a previously disturbed area just outside of the WSA boundary, and 6 acres in the north-central portion of the WSA. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. The visual impacts of these disturbances would be limited due to vegetative and topographic screening and close proximity to existing disturbances within the suitable portion of the WSA. The only

other project which would also minimally affect the naturalness of the area would be a guzzler for elk and mule deer within the north-central portion of the WSA. Its presence would be made up for by the increased opportunity for the wilderness user to observe wildlife.

There would be a slight, positive effect on naturalness due primarily to the closure of the WSA to vehicles. This action would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Also benefiting naturalness would be the closure of the area to additional mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and woodland product harvest.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 20 acres within the nonsuitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA. The disturbance would be located on the east and west sides of the WSA. On the east bench, a 3.5 acre pad for an exploratory oil and gas well and 1.5 miles of access road totalling 5 acres would impair the naturalness values, as would 5 acres (2 miles) of seismic lines along the east bench. These seismic lines would be seen on the bench by the wilderness user as the lines were crossed and from the high country as the user looked directly down on them. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation.

Several of the proposed range developments would affect the area's naturalness only when visitors were in their immediate vicinity. These developments include four short sections of drift fences, two troughs, and two reservoirs. The reservoirs would be more noticeable because of the open nature of the terrain where they are to be constructed. A 580-acre commercial Christmas tree sale along the east bench would leave stumps scattered through the sale area and would have a slight detrimental effect on the natural character of the WSA.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): The limited use of heavy equipment and other vehicles for mineral exploration on 13 acres would minimally affect the area's solitude. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract slightly from the feeling of solitude for those visitors close to the 8 miles of cherrystemmed routes within the suitable portion of the WSA. The vehicle use would occur mostly in October during hunting season.

The elimination of additional mineral and energy exploration and possible development, woodland product harvest, and ORV use, would have a positive effect on solitude.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): The use of heavy equipment and other vehicles would disturb the area's solitude in the vicinity of the mineral and energy exploration and range project construction. These impacts would be of a relatively short nature and dispersed through much of the WSA. Solitude would also be impaired by the sound of chain saws within the commercial cutting areas. The sound of chain saws carry a long distance, although the impacts would be sporadic and based on the number of Christmas trees the contractor was permitted to remove at one time. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude especially in October during hunting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The impacts described in the solitude and naturalness sections above would also diminish the opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation while they are in progress and the visitor is nearby. Elimination of mineral and energy exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use, would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of ongoing mineral and energy exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would diminish the opportunity for primitive or unconfined recreation for those visitors in the vicinity of these operations.

Special Features: Many of the area's special features (the bristlecone pine, trout fishery, and scenic qualities) are located within the suitable portion of the WSA and would receive the added protection from tighter restrictions placed on surface-disturbing activities within wilderness areas. All these values would continue to receive protection by the scenic area designation even though they are partially in the nonsuitable portion. The areas were designated scenic areas in recognition of these special features.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the high scenic qualities of the WSA, the bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, and the trout fisheries. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness values would be preserved. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,200 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and limited mining activity. The remaining 28,370 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 43,649-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 21,000 acres of moderate potential for low grade metallic minerals in the central portion of the WSA and 5,400 acres of high potential in the southern portion. The remainder of the area is identified as having a low potential for such minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include access and drill pad construction. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 38 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration would be reduced to 13 acres due to tighter wilderness restrictions should the suitable portion be designated as wilderness.

All lands within the 29,567-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 13,000 acres of moderate potential and 6,600 acres of high potential for low-grade metallic minerals. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 38 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 13 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 43,649-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA.

The WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal).

All lands within the 29,567-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Actual development of energy resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the unsuitable portion.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within the Mount Grafton WSA would not change. The proposed riparian fencing and elk guzzler would be allowed following criteria in the Wilderness Management Policy. The two areas (1,000 acres) identified for vegetation conversion could occur by limited suppression of wildfires if consistent with the fire management plan prepared for the wilderness area. If seeding is required, only native species would be allowed.

The remaining proposed projects are in the nonsuitable area and would be built and maintained with no wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to facility maintenance and only negligible impacts to new projects.

Impacts on Woodland Product Harvest

The 43,649-acre suitable portion of the Mount Grafton WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland products. The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas tree every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 29,567-acre nonsuitable portion would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 580-acre commercial Christmas tree sale and the commercial sale of pinyon pine nuts.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 60 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative 43,649 acres of the Mount Grafton WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 14 miles of cherrystemmed routes would still provide vehicular access into the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational group affected since little other off-road use occurs. The nonsuitable portion of the WSA which will remain open to ORV use can absorb the foregone ORV use in the suitable area.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 100 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion or other public lands is negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 73,216-acre Mount Grafton WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

MOUNT GRAFTON

Naturalness: Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration activities including road and drill pad construction and trenching would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 58 acres within the Mount Grafton WSA. This disturbance would be spread over four areas: 25 acres in the south, 10 acres in the east, 18 acres in the north-central portion, and 5 acres on the west bench. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. On the east bench of the WSA, a 3.5-acre pad for an exploratory oil and gas well and 1.5 acres of access would impair naturalness values, as would 5 acres (2 miles) of seismic lines. These lines would be seen on the bench by the visitor as the lines were crossed and from the high country as the user looked directly down on them. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landscape which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation.

Several of the proposed range developments would affect the area's naturalness only visitors were when in their immediate vicinity. These include four short sections of drift fences, a 1.5-mile lodgepole riparian fence, two troughs, and two reservoirs. The reservoirs will be more noticeable because of the open nature of the terrain where they are to be constructed. A large elk guzzler would be constructed with a 3,000 gallon storage tank and a 750-square foot fenced catchment area on an open slope in the central portion of the WSA. The guzzler would be highly visible and detract from the naturalness of the vicinity. One vegetation conversion totalling 500 acres would also appear unnatural because of the commercial fuelwood sale which would take place prior to the conversion and seeding. A clearcut area of stumps left by the cutters, as well as piled branches and associated roads and two-wheel tracks constructed for access, would greatly affect the area's naturalness. A 600-acre commercial Christmas tree sale along the east bench would also leave stumps, but to a much lesser extent.

Solitude: The use of heavy equipment and its associated traffic would disturb the area's solitude in the vicinity of the mineral and energy exploration and range project construction. These impacts would be of a relatively short nature and spread through much of the WSA. Solitude would also be impaired by the sound of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas. The sound of chain saws carry a long distance, although the impacts would be sporadic and based on the cordage or number of Christmas trees the contractor was permitted to remove at one time.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude especially in October during hunting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of ongoing mineral exploration, commercial wood product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all combine to diminish the opportunity for primitive or unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The area's special features would not be affected under this alternative. The bristlecone pine, trout fishery, and scenic qualities are protected by other laws, policies, and designations.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term negative impacts to the Mount Grafton WSA's wilderness qualities would occur on approximately 1,600 acres. These impacts would be confined mostly to the east and west benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and mining activity. Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as naturalness would be diminished. The remaining 71,600 acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Mount Grafton WSA would remain open to mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes approximately 34,000 acres of moderate potential for low grade metallic minerals in the central part of the WSA and 12,000 acres of high potential along the southern boundary. Mineral development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. The WSA is rated low for potential energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) (GEM, 1983). Energy development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing, Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments would not change. Range developments planned for the WSA would be completed and maintained. These projects would include, but are not limited to, 1.5 miles of riparian fencing, 5 miles of drift fences, two reservoirs, one elk and mule deer guzzler, several troughs, and two areas for vegetation conversion totalling 1,000 acres.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Woodland Product Harvest

The entire Mount Grafton WSA would be available for commercial and private woodland products harvest. The harvest of 3,000 cords of fuelwood, 1,800 Christmas trees every 6 years and commercial pinyon pine nut sales would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

MOUNT GRAFTON

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Mount Grafton WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Over the long term, the 5 acres of seismic lines would create more access along the east bench for ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below 350 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

FAR SOUTH EGANS WSA

NV-040-172

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 42,316 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 10,908 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Approximately 1,800 acres of a 2,500-acre proposed pinyon woodland conversion on the west side of the WSA would be accomplished by use of a prescribed burn. The effects of these methods of conversion on naturalness would be negligible since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the suitable portion to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive effect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Surface disturbance on 10 acres would result from two exploratory oil and gas exploration wells on the west bench of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Each 3-acre well pad would be stripped of vegetation and topsoil. Access to the pads would total 4 acres of disturbance. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill sites, the well pads may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users hiking the high country on the west side of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the benchlands, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seismic lines would leave 15 miles (30 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 15 years.

Commercial and private fuelwood sales on 700 acres are anticipated. The resulting clearcut area of stumps and slash piles and 1 mile of road would affect the natural character of the WSA. An 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and seeding project on the west bench would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison to the surrounding sagebrush areas.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Occasional vehicle travel would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the WSA's boundary roads and 11 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The absence of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Energy exploration activities would have a negative effect on the wilderness value of solitude while they were occurring. Sights and sounds from seismic traffic and oil well drilling would affect the feeling of solitude for visitors along the west bench.

Solitude would be impaired by the sound of chain saws in the cutting area along the east boundary. Because of the long distances chain saw noise carries, visitors would be disturbed in the northeast portion of the WSA while cutting occurs.

Occasional off-road vehicle use on the nonsuitable bench areas would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the fall hunting and pinyon nut harvesting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Open areas of burned vegetation and occasional vehicle use of the WSA's boundary and cherrystemmed routes would have a negligible effect on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the suitable portion of the WSA. The absence of surface disturbing activities such as mineral and energy exploration, development, and woodland product harvest would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration activities, commercial woodland products sales, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Special Features: The curtailment of mineral and energy exploration development, and woodland product harvest within the suitable portion would help preserve the special features of relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands and remnants of historic logging operations.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on 1,850 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,060 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 42,236-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire WSA is identified as having a low potential. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing

claims would be done in a manner that minimizes the impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 3 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration would not occur due to the lack of valid and existing claims.

All lands within the 10,908-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. Actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 42,316-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The suitable portion has low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated within the suitable portion would be foregone if designation occurs.

All lands within the 10,908-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 700 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources. The remainder of the nonsuitable portion has low potential for energy resources. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources are low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the Far South Egans WSA would not change.

An 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and 1,800 acres of a proposed 2,500-acre pinyon woodland conversion would be accomplished by prescribed burn. The remaining 700 acres of pinyon conversion in the nonsuitable portion could be accomplished by commercial and private fuelwood sales. A proposed livestock well and trough associated with the pinyon conversion would be built outside of the WSA. Two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion would not be built, as well as a 3-mile fence on the west side of the suitable portion which would form the southern boundary of a pasture.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 42,316-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 10,800 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 10,908-acre nonsuitable portion would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 700-acre commercial fuelwood sale with approximately 4,200 cords harvested and a 30-acre Christmas tree sale resulting in approximately 90 trees cut every 6 years.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 10,800 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 42,316 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 11 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the nonsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 42,316 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the suitable portion to all forms of mineral entry and leasing.

On the 10,908 acres designated as nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from energy and mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved notices of intent, plans of operations, and environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 42,316 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 10,908 acres designated as nonwilderness, all present uses would continue. Mineral and energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, seedings, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values in the long-term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 42,316 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is not expected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 10,908 acres designated as nonwilderness, mineral and energy exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: A proposed pinyon woodland conversion totalling 2,500 acres on the west side of the WSA could be accomplished by use of prescribed burns. The effects of this method of conversion on naturalness would be negligible since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the area to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive effect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: Occasional vehicle travel would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the WSA's boundary roads and 28 miles of cherrystemmed routes. The absence of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Open areas of burned vegetation and occasional vehicle use of the WSA's boundary and cherrystemmed routes would have a negligible effect on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the suitable portion of the WSA. The absence of surface-disturbing activities such as mineral and energy exploration, development, and woodland product harvest would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Special Features: The curtailment of mineral and energy exploration development, and woodland product harvest would help preserve the special features of relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, remnants of historic logging operations.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes the impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 3 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration anticipated to occur without wilderness designation would be eliminated due to the lack of valid and existing claims. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to the lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. This includes approximately 700 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources located in the western portion of the WSA. The remainder of the area is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). One of the two exploratory oil wells in addition to 18 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One of the two exploratory oil wells in addition to 18 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Far South Egans WSA would not change.

An 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and seeding and a 2,500-acre pinyon woodland conversion would be accomplished by prescribed burn. A proposed livestock well and trough associated with the pinyon conversion would be built outside of the WSA. Two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion would not be built, as well as a 3-mile fence on the west side of the WSA which would form the southern boundary of a pasture.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 15,000 cords of fuelwood, 980 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 15,000 cords of fuelwood, 980 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 28 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 40,615 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 12,609 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Approximately 1,800 acres of a 2,500-acre proposed pinyon woodland conversion on the west side of the WSA would be accomplished by use of a prescribed burn. The effects of these methods of conversion on naturalness would be negligible since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the suitable portion to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive effect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Surface disturbance on 10 acres would result from 2 exploratory oil and gas exploration wells on the west bench of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Each 3-acre well pad would be stripped of vegetation and topsoil. Access to the pads would total 4 acres of disturbance. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill sites, the well pads may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users hiking the high

country on the west side of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the benchland, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seismic lines would leave 15 miles (30 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 15 years.

Commercial and private fuelwood sales on 840 acres are anticipated to occur and the resulting clearcut area of stumps and slash piles, and 2 miles of road would affect the natural character of the WSA. A 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and seeding project on the west bench would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison to the surrounding sagebrush areas.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Occasional vehicle travel would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the WSA's boundary roads and 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

The absence of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Energy exploration activities would have a negative effect on the wilderness value of solitude while they were occurring. Sights and sounds from seismic traffic and oil well drilling would affect the feeling of solitude for visitors along the west bench.

Solitude would be impaired by the sound of chain saws in the cutting area along the east boundary. Due to the long distances chain saw noise carries, visitors would be disturbed in the northeast portion of the WSA while cutting occurs.

Occasional off-road vehicle use on the nonsuitable bench areas would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the fall hunting and pinyon nut harvesting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Open areas of burned vegetation and occasional vehicle use of the WSA's boundary and cherrystemmed routes would have a negligible effect on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation within the suitable portion of the WSA. The absence of surface disturbing activities such as mineral and energy exploration, development, and woodland product harvest would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration activities, commercial woodland products sales, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Special Features: The curtailment of mineral and energy exploration development, and woodland product harvest within the suitable portion would help preserve the special features of relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, remnants of historic logging operations.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA wilderness would be to preserve the scenic qualities of the relict bristlecone and ponderosa pine stands, the historic logging sites in Sawmill Canyon, and the geologic features of Whipple Cave. The outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and the naturalness values of the WSA would be preserved. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 1,980 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and would result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 10,630 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 40,535-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire WSA is identified as having a low potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 3 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration would be eliminated due to the lack of valid and existing claims.

All lands within the 12,609-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be foregone due to lack of valid and existing claims within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 40,615-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if wilderness designation occurs.

All lands within the 12,609-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 700 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources. The remainder of the nonsuitable portion has low potential for energy resources. Actual development of energy resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration anticipated to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone if wilderness designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the Far South Egans WSA would not change.

An 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and seeding and 1,800 acres of a proposed 2,500-acre pinyon woodland conversion would be accomplished by prescribed burn. The remaining 700 acres of pinyon conversion in the nonsuitable portion could be accomplished by commercial and private fuelwood sales. A proposed livestock well and trough associated with the pinyon conversion would be built outside of the WSA. Two fences totalling 2 miles associated with the pinyon conversion would not be built as well as a 3-mile drift fence on the west side of the suitable portion which would form the southern boundary of a pasture.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. The result of three fences not being built would be the elimination of a pasture and cattle would drift into the pinyon conversion area. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. Proposed vegetation conversions would occur. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 40,615-acre suitable portion of the Far South Egans WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 9,960 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

The remaining 12,609-acre nonsuitable portion would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 700-acre commercial fuelwood sale on the east and a 140-acre sale on the north resulting in the harvest of 5,040 cords. A 30-acre Christmas tree sale on the east side would result in 90 trees cut every 6 years.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 9,960 cords of fuelwood, 890 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 40,615 acres of the Far South Egans WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and seven miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the nonsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 12,609-acre, nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Scheil MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 53,224-acre Far South Egans WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: A small 3-acre mineral exploration program is anticipated to occur on the southeast side of the WSA. Surface disturbance associated with one mile of access road and drill pad construction would physically disturb and impair the natural character on these 3 acres. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. An additional 10 acres of surface disturbance would result from two exploratory oil and gas exploration wells on the west bench of the WSA. Each 3-acre well pad would be stripped of vegetation and topsoil. Access to the pads would total 4 acres of disturbance. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pads may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users hiking the high country on the west side of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the benchland, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seismic lines would leave 18 miles (36 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 15 years.

Commercial and private fuelwood sales on 2,750 acres are anticipated to occur and the resulting clearcut area of stumps and slash piles, and 5 miles of road would affect the natural character of the WSA. A 1,100-acre sagebrush removal and seeding project on the west bench would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison with the surrounding sagebrush area.

A 160-acre commercial Christmas tree sale along Shingle Pass and a 60-acre sale along the east side would slightly affect naturalness by leaving scattered stumps.

Three sections of drift fence totalling 4.5 miles would be built in the WSA. The longest section, 2.5 miles, would be located across open benchland and would have a visually detracting effect on the area's naturalness. As would the two-track route created along side the fence through construction and maintenance. Similar impacts would result from the construction of the other two sections of fence, although they would not be as visible, being located in a partially forested area. The proposed well and trough on the east side would affect naturalness in their immediate vicinity. Approximately one acre would be denuded of vegetation by cattle congregation.

Solitude: Mineral and energy exploration would adversely affect the wilderness value of solitude during their operation. Sights and sounds from seismic traffic and oil well drilling would affect the feeling of solitude for visitors along the west bench. Solitude would be lessened on the WSA's southeast side for a short period of time during the mineral exploration activities.

Solitude would be impaired by the sound of chain saws in the cutting areas along the north and east boundaries. Because of the long distances chain saw noise carries, visitors would be disturbed in most of the northern half of the WSA while cutting occurs.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

Fence and well construction would affect solitude only briefly during their construction and occasional maintenance. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the fall hunting and pinyon nut harvesting season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Mineral and energy exploration activities, commercial woodland products sales, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near those disturbances.

Special Features: The historical values in Sawmill Canyon could be affected by commercial fuelwood cutting. Whipple Cave would be unaffected since it already is managed to protect its special features.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities would occur on 3,900 acres. These impacts would be confined to the benches and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. In addition, historic values in Sawmill Canyon could be affected by commercial woodcutting. The remaining 49,300 acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Far South Egans WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Mineral development is not foreseen within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. This includes 700 acres of moderate potential for geothermal located on the southwest bench of the WSA. Energy development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Far South Egans WSA would not change.

The proposed projects would be constructed. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire Far South Egans WSA would be available for commercial and private woodland products harvest. The harvest of 15,000 cords of fuelwood, 980 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial pinyon pine nut sales would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Far South Egans WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 100 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

FORTIFICATION RANGE WSA

NV-040-177

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: An exploratory oil and gas well and 12 miles of vibroseis lines would physically disturb and impair naturalness on 29 acres on the west side of the WSA. The 3-acre well pad would be stripped of vegetation and topsoil and 2 additional acres would be disturbed from constructing access. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in about 10 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users along the ridge of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seismic lines would leave 12 miles (24 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 15 years.

Commercial fuelwood sales and resulting vegetation conversions would impair naturalness on a total of 1,440 acres. This includes 700 acres in the southern part of the WSA, 350 acres on the west, and 390 acres along the eastern boundary. The resulting clearcut area of stumps and slash piles would greatly affect the natural character of the WSA in the immediate vicinity of the activity. Resulting seeding of nonnative species would slightly affect naturalness.

Solitude: Most of the impacts to solitude resulting from drill pad construction and seismic exploration would be short term and only visitors to the western edge of the WSA would be affected. The noise from chain saws and vehicles in the commercial fuelwood sale areas would occur sporadically over a long period of time and would be heard for great distances. Feelings of solitude in much of the WSA would be impaired during these activities. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters during fall.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of sporadic energy exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic values in Cottonwood Canyon, the remnant ponderosa pines, and the raptor population would be largely unaffected by activities expected under this alternative. The wild horses would experience some short duration impacts from the commercial woodcutting activities.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur on 1,470 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 40,150 acres would retain their wilderness values. The highly scenic central portions of the WSA would remain largely unaffected.

Impacts on Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Fortification Range WSA would remain open for mineral entry. The entire WSA is rated low for potential mineral resources and no mineral exploration or development is expected to occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on exploration and development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the Fortification Range WSA would remain open to all forms of mineral leasing. Energy resource potential in the WSA is low. Some exploration for oil and gas is expected to occur, but no development of oil and gas resources is anticipated.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to exploration and development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of all existing grazing facilities would continue and the proposed vegetation conversion in the southern portion of the WSA would be allowed.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire Fortification Range WSA would be available for commercial and private woodland products harvest. The harvest of 7,500 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial pinyon pine nut sales would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Fortification Range WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Scheff MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 120 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Due to the low priority for conversions, vegetation manipulation would be accomplished only by limited suppression of wildfires. There would be no wilderness restrictions on methods, acreages or timeframes placed on habitat conversions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

The only unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from energy exploration.

Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, chaining and seeding, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values over the long-term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Energy exploration would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: An exploratory oil and gas well would be drilled on the west side of the Fortification Range WSA. The well, located on the lower alluvial bench, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres near the western boundary of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil, and approximately one mile of access. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in 5 years, with intensive reclamation efforts. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users along the ridge of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the WSA to extensive woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would be a slight positive effect on naturalness due to the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicle use, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: Sights and sounds from drilling of an exploratory oil and gas well would temporarily detract from the feeling of solitude on the west alluvial bench of the Fortification Range WSA. Occasional vehicular travel along the WSA's 16 miles of cherrystemmed routes and boundary roads would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to them. Due to the remoteness of the WSA and the minimal vehicular use it receives, this impact would be negligible.

The absence of mineral exploration, woodland harvest, and off-road vehicle use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would have a negligible effect on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Withdrawal of the Fortification Range WSA for mineral and energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the WSA's opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Fortification Range WSA's north end in Cottonwood Canyon, remnant ponderosa pines, nesting raptors, and wild horse herd would receive the added protection of wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS: The impact of designation of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Impacts on Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone. The Fortification Range is considered to have low potential for mineral resources due a thick cap of tertiary volcanics, and no known mineralization. Regardless of wilderness designation, exploration or development of mineral resources is not likely to occur within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone. There would be no impact on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Energy resource potential in the WSA is low. The 12 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Regardless of wilderness designation, development of oil and gas or geothermal resources is not foreseen within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The 12 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for the development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not anticipated to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Fortification Range WSA would not change.

Vegetation conversion of 5,342 acres identified in the southern portion of the WSA would be accomplished by limited wildfire suppression only as wildfires occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Mechanical methods of vegetation conversion would not be allowed. Therefore, conversion would be left to natural processes. A slower rate of vegetation conversion would have no impact on current grazing.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 7,500 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 7,500 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 41,615-acre Fortification Range WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and the 16 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 120 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 120 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat declined as did the number of animals. Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. This method would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining or clear cutting for fuelwood which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals.

CONCLUSIONS: Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 1

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 9,669 acres would receive no special protection.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of 31,946 acres of the WSA to extensive woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would be a slight positive effect on naturalness due to the closure of the 31,946 acres of WSA to off-road vehicle use, which would halt the formation of new two wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): An exploratory oil and gas well and 12 miles of vibroseis lines would physically disturb and impair naturalness on 29 acres on the west side of the WSA. The 3-acre well pad would be stripped of vegetation and topsoil and two additional acres would be disturbed from access. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural appearing condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pads would be highly visible to users along the ridge of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seismic lines would leave 12 miles (24 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 15 years.

A commercial fuelwood sale and resulting vegetation conversion would impair the natural character on 175 acres on the west side of the WSA. The resulting clear cut of stumps and slash piles would impact naturalness in its immediate vicinity. Naturalness would be slightly affected by the presence of nonnative species seeded after the conversion.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Occasional vehicular travel along the WSA's 9 miles of cherrystemmed routes and boundary roads would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to them. Due to the minimal vehicular use it receives, this impact would be negligible.

The absence of energy exploration, woodland product harvest, and off-road vehicle use would have a positive effect on solitude within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Most of the impacts to solitude resulting from drill pad construction and seismic exploration would be short term and only visitors in their vicinity would be affected. The noise from chain saws and vehicles in the commercial fuelwood sale would occur sporadically over a long period of time and would be heard for great distances. Feelings of solitude in this portion of the WSA would be impaired during these activities. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters during fall.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Withdrawal of the Fortification Range WSA for energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the WSA's opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic energy exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Fortification Range WSA's north end in Cottonwood Canyon, remnant ponderosa pines, nesting raptors, are all located within the suitable portion of the WSA. The wild horses would experience some negligible short duration impacts from the commercial woodcutting activities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, in Cottonwood Canyon, wildlife habitat, and the pristine character of the WSA. Long-term adverse impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Fortification Range WSA would occur in the nonsuitable portion on 200 acres. These impacts would be confined to the edges of the WSA and result from vegetation conversions, woodcutting, and energy exploration. The remaining 9,470 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 31,946-acre suitable portion of the Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The WSA is identified as having a low potential for mineral resources. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes the impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator.

All lands within the 9,669-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources due to the lack of mineralization.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 31,946-acre suitable portion of the Fortification Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA.

The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without designation would be foregone if designation occurs.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

All lands within the 9,669-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without designation would be foregone if designation occurs. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of all existing range developments within the suitable and unsuitable portions of the WSA would not change. Impacts on vegetation manipulation are discussed in a following section. No other range developments are proposed for the Fortification Range WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Fortification Range WSA.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 31,946-acre suitable portion of the Fortification Range WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 6,450 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 9,669-acre unsuitable area would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 175-acre commercial sale resulting in the harvest of 1,050 cords of fuelwood.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 6,450 cords of fuelwood, 1,170 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 31,946 acres of the Fortification Range WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and nine miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 75 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group

affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the nonsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 9,669-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 75 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

The 5,342-acre chaining in the southern part of the suitable portion of the WSA would not be allowed. Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed in the suitable portion of the WSA where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. This method would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. This method may take longer than chaining, or clear cutting for fuelwood which would not be allowed in the suitable portion, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals. Mechanical methods for conversion could take place on the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: Limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means. There would be no impact on vegetation conversions in the nonsuitable portion.

TABLE MOUNTAIN WSA

NV-040-197

PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness Alternative)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: A small open pit mine and three exploration programs, all targeting precious minerals (gold and silver), are expected to occur within the Table Mountain WSA. Surface disturbance associated with the open pit gold mine would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 20 acres on the northern border of the WSA. This includes 12 acres for the open pit and 8 acres for waste dumps. The processing and support facilities would be located outside of the WSA at the Atlanta Mine. The presence of waste dumps would result in a modified landform detracting from the natural character of the landscape. Two exploration programs would physically disturb and impair the natural character of a total of 6 acres on the northern border of the WSA. Surface disturbance from exploration would involve 1.5 miles of access and drill pad construction. The perception of naturalness and solitude would be greatly diminished on approximately 3 percent of the northern part of the WSA, due to the location of an active mine in this area.

A similar exploration program would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 4 acres in the east-central portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would result from drill pad construction and 1.5 miles of access. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. This exploration program, although localized to a small area, would substantially detract from the naturalness and solitude of about 500 acres of the WSA due to the high wilderness values that exist in this portion of the WSA.

One 5,000-foot-long drift fence, four spring developments, and a riparian enclosure would be built within the WSA. The drift fence, constructed and maintained by cross-country vehicle use, would be located across open meadows and would have a visually detracting effect on the area's naturalness. Over time, a two-track jeep trail would parallel the fence line. The spring developments and a 200-foot pipeline built with the use of a backhoe would have short-term effects on the naturalness of the WSA in the vicinity of the springs because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of construction, vegetation would become reestablished so that disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable. Structures associated with the spring developments such as troughs and a riparian fence would detract slightly from the area's naturalness.

Vegetation conversions, totalling 3,500 acres proposed throughout the WSA would have different effects on the naturalness of the area, depending on the method of conversion. Burning, either by prescribed or limited wildfire suppression, would have negligible effects since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem. Mechanical means such as chaining or woodland product harvest would result in a clearcut area of stumps and slash piles which would greatly affect the natural character of the WSA. Conversion patterns and commercial cutting areas following natural land forms such as drainages would slightly offset the effect on naturalness.

Solitude: Mineral exploration and development activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. The continual use of heavy equipment and blasting from the mining area would greatly impair the feeling of solitude for visitors in the northern part of the WSA, for the 4-year duration of the mine. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude in the northern and central portions of the WSA for the duration of the activities. Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of the spring developments during the time of development. Solitude would be impaired by the sounds of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially during the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters during the autumn season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of sporadic mineral exploration, mineral development, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic central portion of the WSA, with pristine meadows, sculptured rock formations, and roosting bald eagles would be adversely affected by mineral exploration activities.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the Table Mountain WSA would occur on 2,450 acres in the northern and central portions of the WSA. The highly scenic values of the central portion of the WSA would be impaired. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would be greatly reduced throughout much of the northern part of the WSA due to woodcutting and mining activity. The remaining 33,500 acres would retain their wilderness values, however, the perception of naturalness would be affected on an additional 3 percent of the WSA.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. The entire WSA has been rated as having moderate potential for precious minerals. Mineral development is anticipated within the WSA.

TABLE MOUNTAIN

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. Potential for oil and gas in the WSA is considered low. Energy exploration or development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Table Mountain WSA would not change.

A drift fence would be built and development of four springs with troughs and a fenced enclosure would occur. The developments would be maintained by vehicle use where accessible.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the Table Mountain WSA.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire Table Mountain WSA would be available for commercial and private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 16,870 cords of fuelwood, 11,850 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial pinyon pine nuts would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Table Mountain WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 250 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Vegetation manipulation could be accomplished by burning or mechanical means such as chaining or clear cutting. There would be no wilderness restrictions on methods, acreages, or timeframes placed on habitat conversions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation manipulation for habitat improvement.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

The only unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from mineral exploration and development, and woodland product harvest.

Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved plans of operations and notices of intent.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Nondesignation of the WSA would allow all present short-term uses to continue. Mineral exploration and development, woodland product harvest, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values over the long term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Mineral exploration and development, and woodland product harvest would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: A small open pit mine and one exploration program, both targeting precious minerals (gold and silver), are expected to occur within the Table Mountain WSA. Surface disturbance associated with the open pit mine would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 14 acres along the northern boundary of the WSA. This includes 8 acres for the open pit and 6 acres for waste dumps. The processing and support facilities would be located outside of the WSA at the Atlanta Mine. The presence of a waste dump would result in a modified landform detracting from the natural character of the landscape. Surface disturbance associated with the exploration program would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 2 acres in the northern portion of the WSA. This includes upgrading an existing cherrystem road, creating new, limited access and minimal drill pad construction. The perception of naturalness and solitude would be greatly diminished on approximately 3 percent of the northern part of the WSA due to the location of an active mine in this area. In the long term, however, reclamation would reduce the adverse impacts to naturalness to a much smaller area within the immediate vicinity of the mine.

TABLE MOUNTAIN

Four spring developments would be completed within the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting from vegetation conversion during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the spring developments. The spring sources would be fenced to protect the riparian values, as would an additional 2-acre riparian enclosure near Willow Tub Spring. The presence of fences and troughs would detract slightly from the naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the springs, however, this would be offset by the reestablishment of vegetation within three years and the presence of ungrazed riparian areas.

Vegetation conversions, totalling 3,500 acres, proposed throughout the WSA would be allowed through the use of prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. The effects on naturalness would be negligible since this action would be returning fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the area to mineral exploration and possible development, and to the extensive woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive effect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles. This action would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: The continual use of heavy equipment and blasting from the mining area would greatly impair the feeling of solitude for visitors in the northern part of the WSA for the 4-year duration of the mine. Solitude would also be slightly affected during mineral exploration and development of range projects. This effect would be negligible due to their short duration. Occasional vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the area's boundary roads and seven miles of cherrystemmed routes. The north and west boundary roads receive the most traffic and the remainder of the WSA is fairly secluded.

The reduction of mineral exploration and the elimination of extensive woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral exploration and development and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would enhance the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Special Features: The curtailment of mineral exploration would preserve the highly scenic central portion of the WSA. The pristine meadow complex, ponderosa forest, and sculptured rock formations would remain untouched. Roosting bald eagles would also remain undisturbed by man's activities.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities of solitude and naturalness on all but the extreme northern portion of the WSA. The highly scenic central portion of the WSA would be preserved in its pristine condition.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The entire WSA has been rated as having moderate potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 30 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 16 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 30 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 16 acres if designation occurs.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal).

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The entire WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Table Mountain WSA would not change.

Development and fencing of four springs with troughs and a fenced enclosure would occur although the developments would be subject to the wilderness constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy.

A proposed 5,000-foot drift fence would not be constructed. The lack of this drift fence would not change the current grazing operation in this area, however, cattle drift between the valley and mountains would continue to occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. All but one proposed project, a 5,000-foot drift fence, would be constructed. The absence of the drift fence would not affect current grazing.

TABLE MOUNTAIN

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 16,870 cords of fuelwood, 11,850 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA's to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 16,870 cords of fuelwood, 11,850 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy the demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 35,958-acre Table Mountain WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and the 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 250 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 250 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices have led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat has declined as have the number of animals. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. These two methods would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining, or clear cutting for fuelwood which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals.

CONCLUSIONS: Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

WHITE ROCK RANGE WSA

NV-040-202

PROPOSED ACTION (All Wilderness Alternative)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the Proposed Action, all 24,065 acres of the WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: Two spring developments would be completed within the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the spring developments because of vegetation disturbance. The spring sources would be fenced to protect the riparian values. The presence of fences would detract slightly from the naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the springs, however, this would be offset by the reestablishment of vegetation within 3 years and the presence of ungrazed riparian areas.

A vegetation conversion of approximately 1,000 acres of dense pinyon woodland could be accomplished by prescribed burning. Additional acreage could be converted by the limited suppression of wildfire. The effects on naturalness would be negligible since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the WSA to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to the extensive woodland product harvest all of which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive effect on naturalness due to the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicle use, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: Solitude would be slightly affected during the spring development and fence construction. This effect would be negligible due to its short duration. Occasional vehicular travel along the WSA's 4 miles of cherrystemmed routes and boundary roads would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to them. Due to the remoteness of the WSA and the minimal vehicular use it receives, this impact would be negligible.

The absence of mineral exploration, woodland harvest, and off-road vehicle use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would have a negligible effect on opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, due to the short-term duration of the development activities. Withdrawal of the WSA for mineral and energy exploration and development, as well as woodland product harvest, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the WSA's opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Special Features: The elk in the White Rock Range WSA would receive the added protection of wilderness designation. The reintroduction of fire into a fire dependent ecosystem would have long-term beneficial effects on the elk by creating a more natural habitat with increased forage.

CONCLUSIONS: The impact of designation of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, important scenic values, elk habitat, and the pristine character of the unit.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The entire WSA has been rated as having moderate potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 5 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration anticipated to occur without wilderness designation would be eliminated due to a lack of valid and existing claims. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 5 acres within the WSA. This exploration would be eliminated due to the lack of valid and existing claims. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. Potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) is considered low and it is not likely that exploration or development of energy resources would occur regardless of wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. Favorability for exploration and development is considered low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place, regardless of wilderness designation.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the White Rock Range WSA would not change.

Development and fencing of White Rock and Wildcat Springs would occur although the developments would be subject to the wilderness constraints set forth in the Wilderness Management Policy. These constraints would make the developments more labor intensive. A 3-mile proposed pipeline from Wildcat Springs would not be allowed. This should have little effect on grazing management since lack of water in the area is not a problem. The proposed vegetation conversion would be accomplished through prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. Costs associated with seeding native species following the fire might be higher depending on availability.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Costs would be slightly higher for new project construction and one 3-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would have a negligible affect on grazing.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA would not be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 10,740 cords of fuelwood, 1,760 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA's to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 10,740 cords of fuelwood, 1,760 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial pine nut sales would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since supplies outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and the 4 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreation ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 100 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices have led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat has declined as have the number of animals. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. These two methods would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining or clear cutting for fuelwood which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals.

CONCLUSIONS: Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed to return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 24,065 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the WSA to all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 24,065 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 24,065 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible and irretrievable commitments of wilderness resources is not expected except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, the entire 24,065-acre White Rock Range WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: A small mineral exploration program would occur in the southeast portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance associated with construction of 2 miles of access and 10 drill pads would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres within southeast portion of the White Rock Range WSA. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to the thick tree cover and dissected topography these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

Two spring developments and a 3-mile pipeline would be constructed within the WSA. The use of a backhoe and bulldozer would have both short-term and long-term effects on the naturalness of the WSA in the vicinity of the springs and pipeline route because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of development, vegetation would become reestablished so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable near the springs. Structures associated with the spring developments such as troughs and a fenced riparian enclosure would detract slightly from the natural character of the area. The pipeline route would leave a 4-mile unnatural corridor with a two-track road through the woodland that would remain for many years.

Naturalness would be affected by several vegetation removals. On the east side of the WSA a 440-acre intense woodcutting effort would result in a clearcut area of stumps, slash piles, and 3 miles of low-grade access routes. On the west side of the WSA a 1,500-acre chaining would remove the trees and a subsequent seeding would result in an unnatural appearing monotypic stand of nonnative grasses. The impact on the perception of naturalness resulting from these disturbances would be somewhat mitigated by feathering the edges of the chaining and cutting areas to avoid sharp contrasts in vegetation. Additionally, 5 miles of low-grade access routes would be created by salvage woodcutters.

Solitude: Mineral exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude on the southeast portion of the WSA for the duration of the activities.

Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of the spring developments and pipeline during the time of development. Solitude would be impaired by the sounds of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially in the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters in the autumn season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of sporadic mineral exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all combine to diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The elk herd uses the northern portion of the WSA and would be unaffected by mineral exploration activities occurring to the south.

Limited fire suppression, prescribed burning, chaining, and woodland product harvest would have an initial short-term negative impact but would benefit the elk over the long term by increasing their foraging areas.

CONCLUSIONS: Long term impacts to the wilderness qualities of the White Rock Range WSA would occur on approximately 1,950 acres. Most of the affected acreage would occur from vegetation removal. These disturbances would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 22,100 acres would retain their wilderness values.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the White Rock Range WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 24,065 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Mineral development is not foreseen within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. The entire WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). Energy exploration and development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the White Rock Range WSA would not change.

Development and fencing of two springs would occur, as well as a 3-mile pipeline from Wildcat Springs. The developments would be maintained by vehicle. Vegetation conversion of 1,950 acres would be accomplished by chaining and woodcutting. Additional acreage would be converted by prescribed burn or limited wildfire suppression.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction within the White Rock Range WSA.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire White Rock Range WSA would be available for commercial or private woodland product harvest. The harvest of 10,740 cords of fuelwood, 1,760 Christmas trees every 6 years, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland product harvest.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The White Rock Range WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 100 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Vegetation manipulation could be accomplished by burning or mechanical means such as chaining or clear cutting. There would be no wilderness restrictions on methods, acreages, or timeframes placed on habitat conversions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions.

PARSNIP PEAK WSA

NV-040-206

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 53,560 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 34,615 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration in the Gold Tower claim area would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 2 acres in the west-central part of the suitable portion of the WSA. Limited access would be constructed as well as numerous drill pads. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to thick tree cover and dissected topography, these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

One spring development would be completed within the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the spring development, due to vegetation disturbance. The spring source would be fenced and troughs located outside the fence. The presence of the fence and troughs would detract slightly from the natural character in its immediate vicinity, however, this would be offset by the reestablishment of vegetation within 3 years and the presence of ungrazed riparian areas.

A 3-mile division fence proposed within the Wilson Burn area would have a nominal effect on the naturalness of the WSA when built. The burn area is currently enclosed by a fence, for grazing purposes.

Approximately 8,500 acres of 18,000 acres proposed for vegetation conversions lie within the suitable portion of the WSA. These conversions would be allowed and accomplished through the use of prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. The effects on naturalness would be negligible since this action would be returning fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the withdrawal of the suitable area to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight, positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new, two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration in the Gold Tower claim area would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 3 acres in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would be associated with construction of limited access and drill pads. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to thick tree cover and dissected topography, these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated in the southwest corner of the WSA would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and one mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in about eight years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pad would be highly visible to users along the southwestern portion of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seven miles of seismic line would result in 14 acres of disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks on the west edge of the WSA. The linear tracks would be visible for approximately five years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

One spring development would occur within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The use of a backhoe and bulldozer would have both short-term and long-term effects on the naturalness of the nonsuitable portion in the vicinity of the spring because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of development, vegetation would become reestablished so that disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable near the spring. Structures associated with the spring development such as trough and a fenced riparian enclosure would detract slightly from the character of the area.

Vegetation treatment areas within 9,500 acres proposed for vegetation conversion in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would have different effects on the naturalness of the area depending on the method of conversion. Approximately 6,000 acres in the southwest portion of the WSA are proposed to be burned and seeded with crested wheatgrass. The seeding effort would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison with the surrounding untreated area. Approximately 2,500 acres along the upper southwest benches would also be treated. Here, many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres in size, would finger through the woodlands resulting in a mosaic of open areas within the trees. The mosaic pattern of treatment for this 2,500 acres would lessen the overall impact on the perception of naturalness. On the eastern portion of the WSA, an additional 1,000 acres of chainings and prescribed burns would take place in the manner described above.

Commercial and private fuelwood sales totalling 200 acres and 2 miles of new access development would detract from the natural character of the WSA by creating areas of clearcuts, stumps, and slash piles.

PARSNIP PEAK

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Solitude would be slightly affected while mineral exploration, and development of range projects occur. Due to their short-term nature and the fact that the spring development and fences would be constructed and maintained without the use of vehicles, little disturbance to the visitor's feeling of solitude would result.

Occasional vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the area's boundary roads and 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes within the suitable portion of the WSA.

The reduction of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA, for the duration of the activities. Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of the spring development during the time of development. Solitude would be impaired by the sounds of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially in the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters in the autumn season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the opportunities for primitive recreation within the suitable portion.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic mineral exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all combine to diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA; the potential National Register District; and the ponderosa pine and Gambel oak stands; are located almost entirely within the suitable portion of the WSA and would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designating the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term negative impacts to the wilderness qualities in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 8,200 acres. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and the eastern slopes of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 26,400 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 53,560-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire WSA is rated as having a moderate potential for metallic minerals. In addition, there are approximately 1,350 acres with high potential for perlite. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes the impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration activities would total 7 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This exploration would be reduced to 5 acres due to tighter wilderness restrictions should the suitable portion be designated as wilderness.

All lands within the 34,615-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 5 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 53,560-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA, however, exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion regardless of wilderness designation. Potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) is considered low within the entire WSA.

All lands within the 34,615-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire WSA. Development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the suitable and unsuitable portions of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not change.

Range developments proposed for the Parsnip Peak WSA include two spring developments, one 2-mile pipeline, and a 3-mile division fence. The one spring development and the 3-mile division fence within the suitable portion would be constructed. Due to inaccessible terrain, heavy equipment or vehicles would not be used for maintenance or construction. The proposed 2-mile pipeline would not be built. Without the pipeline, better distribution of cattle would not be achieved. Occasional over or under use of forage could occur.

The spring development proposed in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would be built with no wilderness restrictions.

Impacts on vegetation conversions are discussed in a following section.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 53,560-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 34,615-acre unsuitable area would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 200-acre post and pole sale.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under the Proposed Action, 53,560 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 2½ miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the unsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 34,615-acre, unsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices have led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat has declined as has the number of animals. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. These two methods would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals. Specifically, within the suitable portion of the WSA, the 1,000-acre chaining in the north and 750-acre chaining in the southwest parts of the WSA would not be allowed.

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CONCLUSIONS: Seventeen hundred and fifty acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 53,560 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the suitable portion to all forms of mineral entry and leasing.

On the 34,615 acres designated as nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from energy and mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved notices of intent and plans of operation and environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 53,560 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 34,615 acres designated as nonwilderness, all present uses would continue. Mineral and energy exploration and development, woodland product harvest, chainings, seedings, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values in the long term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 53,560 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible and irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is not expected except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 34,615 acres designated as nonwilderness, mineral and energy exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: Surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 4 acres in the west-central portion of the WSA. Two miles of limited access would be constructed as well as numerous drill pads. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to thick tree cover and dissected topography, these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

Two spring developments would be completed within the WSA. Minor surface disturbance resulting during development would have a negligible short-term effect on naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the spring developments due to vegetation disturbance. The spring sources would be fenced and troughs located outside the fence. The presence of the fences and troughs would detract slightly from the natural character in their immediate vicinity, however, this would be offset by the reestablishment of vegetation within 3 years and the presence of ungrazed riparian areas.

Vegetation conversions proposed throughout the WSA would be allowed through the use of prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. The effects on naturalness would be negligible since this action would be returning fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the withdrawal of the area to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest which would occur without wilderness designation. There would also be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new, two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: Solitude would be slightly affected while mineral exploration, and development of range projects occur. Due to their short-term nature and the fact that the spring developments and fences would be constructed and maintained without the use of vehicles, little disturbance to the visitor's feeling of solitude would result.

Occasional vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the area's boundary roads and 25 miles of cherrystemmed routes.

The reduction of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA, the potential National Register District, and the ponderosa pine stands would receive the added protection resulting from wilderness designation.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designation of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the special archaeological features, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa pine and Gambel oak stands.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. This includes 3,350 acres with high potential for perlite. The demand for perlite is currently being supplied from the southwest and would be for the foreseeable future. In addition, the entire WSA has been rated as having a moderate potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes the impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 7 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 4 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include limited access construction and drill pads. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not expected to occur within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. This includes 3,350 acres of perlite reserves. The 7 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 4 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The entire WSA is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal).

One exploratory oil well and 7 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be eliminated as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions.

Regardless of wilderness designation, development of energy resources is not anticipated.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. One exploratory oil well and 7 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development is not expected to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Parsnip Peak WSA would not change.

Range developments proposed for the Parsnip Peak WSA include two spring developments, one 2-mile pipeline, and a 3-mile division fence. The two spring developments and the 3-mile division fence would be constructed. Due to inaccessible terrain, no heavy equipment or vehicles would be used for maintenance or construction of the fence or Sage Hen Spring.

Heavy equipment could be used for the development of Little Mud Spring although maintenance would be done on foot or horseback.

The proposed 2-mile pipeline would not be built. Without the pipeline, better cattle distribution would not be achieved. Occasional over or under use of forage could occur. Impacts on vegetation conversions are discussed in a following section.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance. One 2-mile section of pipeline would not be allowed. The absence of the pipeline would not affect current grazing, however, better cattle distribution would not be achieved.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, 1,400 posts and poles, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, 1,400 posts and poles, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 25 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices have led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat has declined as well as the number of animals. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. These two methods would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals. Specifically, a 6,000-acre crested wheatgrass seeding would not be allowed. The prescribed burn could occur however, seeding would be accomplished with native species by nonmechanical means. In addition, the 1,000-acre chaining in the northern part of the WSA and the 2,000 acres of chaining on the southwest portion of the WSA would not be allowed.

CONCLUSIONS: A 6,000-acre seeding and 3,000 acres of chaining would not be allowed. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the WSA to a more natural condition. Vegetation conversions under these methods would take somewhat longer than using mechanical means.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 34,310 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 53,865 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Approximately 5,400 acres of the 18,000 acres proposed for vegetation conversions lie within the suitable portion of the WSA. These conversions would be allowed through the use of prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. The effects on naturalness would be negligible since this action would be returning fire into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Naturalness would be benefited by the closure of the suitable area to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and to woodland product harvest. There would also be a slight, positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new, two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character of a total of 26 acres within the nonsuitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA.

A small exploration program targeting precious minerals in the Gold Tower claim area would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 7 acres on the western border of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include 2 miles of access construction and drill pads. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to thick tree cover and dissected topography, these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated in the southwest corner of the nonsuitable portion would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and one mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pad would be highly visible to users along the southwestern portion of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seven miles of seismic line would result in 14 acres of disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks on the western side of the nonsuitable portion. The linear tracks would be visible for approximately 5 years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

A 3-mile division fence proposed within the Mount Wilson Burn area within the nonsuitable portion would have a nominal effect when built on the natural character of the area. The burn area is currently enclosed by a fence, for grazing purposes.

Two spring developments and a 2-mile pipeline would be constructed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The use of a backhoe and bulldozer would have both short-term and long-term effects on the natural character in the vicinity of the springs and pipeline route because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of development, vegetation would become reestablished so that disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable near the springs. Structures associated with the spring developments such as troughs and a fenced riparian enclosure would detract slightly from the natural character of the area. The pipeline route would result in an additional 2 miles of new road for maintenance purposes and in places may appear as an unnatural corridor.

Vegetation treatment areas within 13,000 acres proposed for vegetation conversion in the nonsuitable portion would have different effects on the naturalness of the area depending on the method of conversion. Prescribed burning or limited suppression of wildfire on 10,000 acres would have negligible effects on naturalness, since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem. Approximately 6,000 acres in the southwest portion of the WSA are proposed to be burned and seeded with crested wheatgrass. The seeding effort would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison with the surrounding untreated area. Approximately 4,000 acres along the upper southwest benches would also be treated. Here, many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres in size,

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would finger through the woodlands, resulting in a mosaic of open areas within the trees. The mosaic pattern of treatment for this 4,000 acres would lessen the overall impact on the perception of naturalness. On the eastern portion of the WSA, an additional 2,600 acres of chainings would take place.

Mechanical methods such as chaining, proposed for approximately 2,600 acres, would result in large areas of vegetation disturbance and slash piles which would greatly affect the natural character of the WSA. Commercial and private fuelwood sales totalling 240 acres and 2.5 miles of new access development would detract from the natural character of the WSA by creating areas of clear cuts, stumps, and slash piles.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Occasional vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude for those visitors in close proximity to the area's boundary roads and 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes within the suitable portion of the WSA.

The reduction of mineral exploration and the elimination of woodland product harvest and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude in the nonsuitable portions of the WSA, for the duration of the activities. Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of the spring developments during the time of development. Solitude would be impaired by the sounds of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially in the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters in the autumn season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The elimination of mineral exploration, woodland product harvest, and ORV use would all have a positive effect on enhancing the suitable areas outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic mineral exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would all combine to diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA, and stands of ponderosa pine and Gambels oak are for the most part located within the suitable portion of the WSA and would receive the added protection afforded from wilderness designation. The potential National Register district lies within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of wilderness designation for the suitable portion of the WSA would be to preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, highly scenic values, and the ponderosa and Gambel oak stands. Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 8,870 acres in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These impacts would be concentrated along the southwest bench and eastern slopes of the WSA. The majority of the disturbance would be related to vegetation conversions which would become more natural appearing with the passage of time. The remaining 45,000 nonsuitable acres would retain their wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 34,310-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 675 acres of high potential for perlite. The remainder of the area is identified as having a moderate potential for metallic minerals. Mineral exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. All exploration expected to occur within the WSA would take place in the nonsuitable portion.

All lands within the 53,865-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 2,675 acres of high potential for perlite. Actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 34,310-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA, however, exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion regardless of wilderness designation. Potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) is considered low within the entire WSA.

All lands within the 53,865-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

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CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration for energy resources is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the entire WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts to the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the suitable and unsuitable portions of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not change.

Range developments proposed for the Parsnip Peak WSA include two spring developments, one 2 mile pipeline, and 3-mile division fence. All of these projects are within the unsuitable portion of the WSA and would be constructed with no wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The 34,310-acre suitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA would not be available for commercial or private harvest of woodland products. The harvest of 240 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since there are enough areas outside of the suitable portion of the WSA to supply woodland products for the foreseeable future.

The remaining 53,865-acre unsuitable area would be available for woodland product harvest. This would include a 200-acre post and pole sale, and a 40 acre commercial fuelwood sale..

CONCLUSIONS: The harvest of 240 cords of fuelwood, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts within the suitable portion of the WSA would be foregone. This would be a minor impact since woodland products readily available outside of the suitable portion of the WSA could satisfy demand.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 34,310 acres of the Parsnip Peak WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 2 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the unsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 53,865-acre, nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Past fire suppression and grazing practices have led to a dense forest cover with little understory. Wildlife habitat has declined as has the number of animals. Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed where consistent with the fire management plan for the wilderness area. These two methods would allow for a gradual return to a mosaic of open and wooded areas benefiting both wildlife and livestock. These methods may take longer than chaining which would not be allowed, but would ultimately accomplish the same goals. Specifically, in the suitable portion of the WSA no chainings are proposed.

The conversion of the 5,000 acres would be done by prescribed burns or limited suppression of wildfires. The 3,000 acres proposed for chaining and the 6,000 acres proposed for sagebrush removal and seeding lie within the nonsuitable portion. Operations in these areas would be unhampered by wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: Prescribed burns and limited suppression of wildfires would be allowed and would return the suitable portion of the WSA to a more natural condition. The proposed chainings and seedings within the nonsuitable portion would occur. There would be no impacts on vegetation manipulation.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 88,175-acre Parsnip Peak WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: Mineral and energy exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character of a total of 26 acres within the nonsuitable portion of the Parsnip Peak WSA.

A small exploration program targeting precious minerals in the Gold Tower claim area would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 7 acres on the western border of the WSA. Surface disturbance would include 2 miles of access construction and drill pads. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years. Due to thick tree cover and dissected topography these disturbances would be noticeable only in their immediate vicinity.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated in the southwest corner of the nonsuitable portion would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a three acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and 1 mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in about 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. Prior to revegetation, the well pad would be highly visible to users along the southwestern portion of the WSA. Due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the valley, the perception of naturalness would be affected to a greater degree than the small acreage would imply. Seven miles of seismic line would result in 14 acres of disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks on the west edge of the WSA. The tracks would be visible for approximately 15 years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

A 3-mile division fence proposed within the Mount Wilson Burn area would have a nominal effect when built on the naturalness of the WSA. The burn area is currently enclosed by a fence, for grazing purposes.

Two spring developments and a 2-mile pipeline would be constructed within the WSA. The use of a backhoe and bulldozer would have both short-term and long-term effects on the natural character of the WSA in the vicinity of the springs and pipeline route because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of development, vegetation would become reestablished so that disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable near the springs. Structures associated with the spring developments such as troughs and a fenced riparian enclosure would detract slightly from the natural character of the area, however, this would be offset by the reestablishment of vegetation within 3 years and the presence of ungrazed riparian areas. The pipeline route would result in an additional 2 miles of new road for maintenance purposes and in places may appear as an unnatural corridor.

Vegetation treatment areas within 18,000 acres proposed for vegetation conversion would have different effects on the naturalness of the area depending on the method of conversion. Prescribed burning or limited suppression of wildfire on 13,000 acres would have negligible effects on naturalness, since this would be reintroducing fire into a fire dependent ecosystem. Approximately 6,000 acres in the southwest portion of the WSA are proposed to be burned and seeded with crested wheatgrass. The seeding effort would result in an area appearing somewhat unnatural in comparison with the surrounding untreated area. Approximately 4,000 acres along the upper southwest benches would also be treated. Here, many small chainings and prescribed burns, each about 160 acres in size, would finger through the woodlands, resulting in a mosaic of open areas within the trees. The mosaic pattern of treatment for this 4,000 acres would lessen the overall impact on the perception of naturalness. On the eastern portion of the WSA, an additional 1,000 acres of chainings would occur.

Mechanical methods such as chaining, would result in large areas of vegetation disturbance and slash piles which would greatly affect the natural character of the WSA. Commercial and private fuelwood sales totalling 280 acres and 4 miles of new access development would detract from the natural character of the WSA by creating areas of clear cuts, stumps, and slash piles.

Solitude: Mineral and energy exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude in the western and southwestern portions of the WSA, for the duration of the activities. Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of the spring developments during the time of construction and subsequent maintenance visits. Solitude would be impaired by the sounds of chain saws within the commercial woodcutting areas.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, especially in the September-October hunting season. During years of peak pinyon nut crop, certain areas would experience an increase in nut harvesters in the autumn season.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of sporadic mineral exploration, commercial woodland product harvest, and occasional ORV use would all combine to diminish the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation for the visitors near these disturbances.

Special Features: The highly scenic qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA, and stands of ponderosa pine and Gambels oak would be unaffected by anticipated mineral and energy exploration activities. Range developments and occasional ORV use would not affect the WSA's special features. The potential National Register district lies within the unsuitable portion of the WSA and would continue to be slightly degraded by salvage woodcutting in the Mount Wilson burn area and the associated off-road vehicle use.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term physical impairment to the wilderness qualities of the Parsnip Peak WSA would occur on approximately 9,310 acres on the northern and southwestern portions of the WSA. Opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation would also be reduced. The highly scenic values within the WSA would not be impaired. The stands of ponderosa pine and Gambels oak, and the potential National Register district would not be affected by a no wilderness designation.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Parsnip Peak WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes reserves of perlite near the western border and moderate potential for metallic minerals in the remainder of the WSA.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to the exploration or development of potential mineral resources.

PARSNIP PEAK

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the Parsnip Peak WSA would remain open to all forms of mineral leasing. Energy resource potential for the WSA is considered low and exploration or development of these resources is not anticipated. Because the WSA would remain available for mineral leasing, there would be no impact to development of potential energy resources. Energy development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Parsnip Peak WSA would not change.

Range developments proposed for the Parsnip Peak WSA including two spring developments, a 2-mile pipeline, 3 miles of drift fence would be built. Vegetation conversions within the WSA would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

Impacts on Woodland Products Harvest

The entire Parsnip Peak WSA would be available for commercial and private woodland products harvest. The harvest of 480 cords of fuelwood, 1,400 post and poles, and commercial sales of pinyon pine nuts would occur.

The remaining 53,865-acre unsuitable area would be available for woodland product-harvest. This would include a 200-acre post and pole sale, and a 40-acre commercial fuelwood sale.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on woodland products harvest.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Parsnip Peak WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 200 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Vegetation Manipulation

Vegetation manipulation could be accomplished by burning or mechanical means such as chaining. There would be no wilderness restrictions on methods, acreages, or timeframes placed on habitat conversions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impacts to proposed vegetation conversions for habitat improvement.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS WSA

NV-040-242

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 26,587 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 21,046 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Mineral exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 3 acres in the southern part of the Freiburg Mining District within the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would result from construction of minimal access and drill pads. Until vegetation can be reestablished (15 years), the denuded drill pads would be visible to visitors in the northeast portion of the WSA. Portions of the pipeline spurs totalling 1 mile originating at Wild Horse Springs would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads in the suitable portion. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in their immediate vicinity. The guzzlers would be buried and camouflaged and not visible for any distance.

Naturalness would be benefited by the withdrawal of the suitable portion from mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and communication site placement. There would also be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Approximately 7.5 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. One 2.5 mile pipeline would be constructed outside of disturbed areas. Development activities would disturb a 12-foot swath along the pipeline route. The disturbed stretch would revegetate in about 15 years.

Seismic lines would leave 7 miles (14 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 20 years. This disturbance would occur on the west bench in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA where the presence of numerous cherrystemmed routes already affects the perception of naturalness.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Sights and sounds from a limited exploration program in the northern part of the suitable portion would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these disturbances. Solitude would also be diminished during the construction of 1 mile of pipelines.

Occasional vehicle use including seismic exploration on existing boundary roads and 5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would diminish the feeling of solitude for visitors near these areas.

The reduction of mineral exploration and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Solitude would be diminished from the use of heavy equipment in the western and southern nonsuitable portions where the majority of the 9 miles of pipeline would be placed.

Solitude would also be diminished on the west bench during episodes of seismic exploration.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude particularly along the nonsuitable western bench area where the majority of use is expected to occur.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral exploration, communication site placement, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic energy exploration and ORV use would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, especially on the western bench.

Special Features: All of the WSA's special features lie within the suitable portion of the WSA. These include cave resources, in particular Leviathan Cave. These caves are located in the nearly impenetrable cliffs that afford them almost complete protection. Similarly, the remnant stands of bristlecone and ponderosa pine, located in the inaccessible reaches of numerous side canyons would remain unaffected by any anticipated disturbances within the suitable portion of the WSA. Wilderness designation would enhance the protection and preservation of these special features.

CONCLUSIONS: Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the nonsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 20 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the western bench.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 26,587-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 2,760 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. The remainder of the area is identified as having a low potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 14 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 3 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include minimal access construction and drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, surface disturbing activities such as trenching would not be allowed.

All lands within the 21,046-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 640 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 26,587-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA.

The entire Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal).

Seismic exploration totalling 1 mile of vibroseis line within the suitable portion of the WSA would be restricted to an existing cherrystemmed route. Two additional miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur without wilderness designation would be foregone if designation occurs.

All lands within the 21,046-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Of the 3 miles of vibroseis exploration expected to occur within the suitable portion without wilderness designation, 2 of the miles would be foregone and one would be restricted to existing roads or ways. Favorability for development of potential energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources within the unsuitable portion.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within both the suitable and unsuitable portions of the Worthington Mountains WSA would not change. One mile of pipeline proposed within the suitable portion of the WSA would be constructed in a previously disturbed area. An additional 1-mile stretch of pipeline and a 2-mile portion of a pasture fence would not be constructed in the suitable portion of the WSA. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's.

Four proposed pipelines totalling 9 miles would be constructed in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 26,587 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the unsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 21,046-acre, unsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 25 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the unsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 26,587 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the suitable portion to all forms of mineral entry and leasing.

On the 21,046 acres designated as nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from energy and mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved notices of intent, plans of operation, and environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 26,587 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 21,046 acres designated as nonwilderness, all present uses would continue. Mineral and energy exploration and development, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values in the long-term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 26,587 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is not expected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 21,046 acres designated as nonwilderness, mineral and energy exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: Mineral exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character on three acres in the southern part of the Freiburg Mining District within the WSA. Surface disturbance would result from construction of minimal access and drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, surface disturbance would leave scars that would be visible for long distances. Until vegetation can be reestablished (15 years), the denuded drill pads would be visible to visitors in the northeast portion of the WSA. Four proposed pipelines totalling 10 miles would be constructed within

the berms of cherrystemmed roads. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in their immediate vicinity. The guzzlers would be buried and camouflaged and not visible for any distance.

Naturalness would be benefited by the withdrawal of most of the area to mineral and energy exploration and possible development, and communication site placement. There would also be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Solitude: Sights and sounds from a limited exploration program in the northern portion of the WSA would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these disturbances. Solitude would also be diminished for a short-term during the construction of the pipelines.

Occasional vehicle use, including seismic exploration, on existing boundary roads and 14 miles of cherrystemmed routes would diminish the feeling of solitude for visitors near these areas.

The reduction of mineral exploration, communication site placement, and ORV use would have a positive effect on solitude within the WSA.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral exploration, communication site placement, and ORV use would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Special Features: The WSA's primary special features are the cave resources, in particular Leviathan Cave. These caves are located in the nearly impenetrable cliffs that afford them almost complete protection. Similarly, the remnant stands of bristlecone and ponderosa pine, located in the inaccessible reaches of numerous side canyons would remain unaffected by any anticipated disturbances within the WSA. Wilderness designation would enhance the protection and preservation of these special features.

CONCLUSIONS: Designation of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 3,400 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals located in the northern portion of the WSA. The remainder of the WSA is identified as having a low potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 14 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration anticipated to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 3 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include minimal access construction and drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, surface disturbing activities such as trenching would not be allowed. With or without wilderness designation, actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres if designation occurs. Favorability for development of mineral resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). With or without wilderness designation, development of potential energy resources is not anticipated to take place within the WSA. Of the 10 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation, 3 would be foregone and 7 would be limited to existing roads.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Of the 10 miles of vibroseis exploration expected without wilderness designation, 3 of these would be foregone and 7 would be limited to existing roads. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and exploration or development of energy resources is not expected to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within Worthington Mountains WSA would not change. Four proposed pipelines totalling 10 miles would be built within the WSA. A 1-mile pipeline from Freiburg Well and a 2-mile pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on the maintenance of existing and proposed grazing facilities. One mile of pipeline and 2 miles of pasture fence would not be built. This would hamper implementation of a grazing system to achieve better utilization of AUM's. There would be a negative impact to grazing facility construction.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 14 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 150 visitor days annually would be foregone. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 150 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 17,500 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 30,133 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Mineral exploration would physically disturb and impair the natural character on 3 acres in the southern part of the Freiburg Mining District within the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance would result from construction of minimal access and drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, surface disturbance would leave scars that would be visible for long distances. Until vegetation can be reestablished (15 years), the denuded drill pads would be visible to visitors in the northeast portion of the WSA. Portions of pipeline spurs totalling 1 mile, originating at Wild Horse Springs would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads in the suitable portion. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in their immediate vicinity. The guzzlers would be buried and camouflaged and not visible for any distance.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Naturalness would be benefited by the withdrawal of the suitable portion from mineral and energy exploration and possible development. There would also be a slight, positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new, two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Approximately 1 mile of access road associated with a limited exploration program in the suitable portion, would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 2 acres within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Seismic lines would leave 8 miles (16 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 20 years. Most of this disturbance would occur on the west bench of the nonsuitable portion of the WSA where the presence of numerous cherrystemmed routes already affects the perception of naturalness.

Approximately 7.5 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. Two pipelines totalling 2.5 miles would be constructed outside of disturbed areas. Development activities would disturb a 12-foot swath along the pipeline route. The disturbed stretch would revegetate in about 8 years.

Construction of a 2-mile stretch of fence along the east bench would result in the formation of a primitive two-track road paralleling the fence. Although the fence itself would not create noticeable surface disturbance its presence on a fairly pristine bench would be visually very impairing.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Sights and sounds from a limited exploration program in the northern part of the suitable portion would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these disturbances. Solitude would also be diminished for a short-term during the construction of 1 mile of pipelines. The reduction of mineral exploration would have a positive effect on solitude within the very northern portion of the WSA.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Solitude would be diminished from the use of heavy equipment in the western and southern nonsuitable portions where the majority of the 10 miles of pipeline would be placed. Solitude would also be diminished on the west bench and to a much lesser extent, on the east bench during episodes of seismic exploration. Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude particularly along the nonsuitable western bench area where the majority of use is expected to occur.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): The impacts described in the naturalness and solitude sections above would also affect the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, particularly in the northern portion of the area. The reduction of mineral and energy exploration, and communication site placement would have a positive effect on enhancing the area's opportunities for primitive recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic energy exploration and ORV use would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, especially on the western bench.

Special Features: All of the WSA's special features lie within the suitable portion of the WSA. These include cave resources, in particular Leviathan Cave. These caves are located in the nearly impenetrable cliffs that afford them almost complete protection. Similarly, the remnant stands of bristlecone and ponderosa pine, located in the inaccessible reaches of numerous side canyons would remain unaffected by any anticipated disturbances within the suitable portion of the WSA. Wilderness designation would enhance the protection and preservation of these special features.

CONCLUSIONS: Designation of the suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA as wilderness would preserve the excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, especially spelunking within Leviathan Cave, one of the special features of the WSA. Remnant stands of ponderosa and bristlecone pine would also be preserved.

Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the nonsuitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area especially on the western bench. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 17,500-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 2,300 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. The remainder of the area is identified as having a low potential for metallic minerals. Exploration for mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 14 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration anticipated to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 3 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Surface disturbance associated with exploration activities would include minimal access construction and drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, surface disturbing activities such as trenching would not be allowed.

All lands within the 30,137-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 1,100 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated to occur within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 14 acres of surface disturbing exploration activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 3 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 17,500-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation.

All lands within the 30,137-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within both the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the Worthington Mountains WSA would not change. Only 1 mile of pipeline is proposed to be constructed within the suitable portion and would be built in a previously disturbed area. Four proposed pipelines totalling 11 miles in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be constructed. A pasture fence, totalling 1.5 miles would be built in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. The remaining .5 miles within the suitable portion would not be allowed.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities. The absence of .5 miles of pasture fence in the suitable portion of the WSA would result in some cattle drift which would affect the management of the pasture system.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 17,500 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. Due to the extremely rugged terrain in the suitable portion, recreational ORV use is almost nonexistent.

The remaining 30,133-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 3

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 5,255 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 42,408 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Due to the small size and rugged nature of the suitable portion of the WSA, naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation would remain almost totally unaffected by intrusive developments or activities. The placement of one bighorn sheep guzzler along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in its immediate vicinity. The guzzler would be buried and camouflaged and not visible for any distance. The natural character of the suitable portion would be positively benefited by the prohibition of a communication site on Meeker Peak.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Two small mineral exploration programs would occur in the northwest corner of the WSA. Surface disturbance associated with construction of 2 miles of access and a modest drilling and trenching program would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 8 acres in the northern part of the WSA. An additional 6 acres would be disturbed on the northwest flank from 3 miles of access and eight drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, these scars would be visible for long distances. Seismic lines would leave 8 miles (16 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 20 years. Most of this disturbance would take place on the west bench of the WSA where the presence of numerous cherrystemmed routes already affects the perception of naturalness.

Approximately 8.5 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. Two pipelines totalling 2.5 miles would be constructed outside of disturbed areas. Development activities would disturb a 12-foot swath along the pipeline route. The disturbed stretch would revegetate in about 8 years.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Construction of a 2-mile stretch of fence along the east bench would result in the formation of a primitive two-track road paralleling the fence. Although the fence itself would not create noticeable surface disturbance its presence on a fairly pristine bench would be visually impairing. The placement of two bighorn guzzlers along the ridge in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would affect the WSA's natural character in their vicinity. The 1,300 square foot black polyethylene apron would be visible from nearby peaks but would blend into the landscape from a distance, as would the painted water storage tanks.

The placement of a communication site atop Worthington Peak would greatly detract from hikers perceptions of naturalness. This facility would be helicoptered in and would each physically impact a 100 x 100 foot area and would be visible from many portions of the WSA due to its elevated position.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Refer to the naturalness section.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Mineral and energy exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude on the northwest portion of the WSA for the duration of the mineral activities, and on the west bench and to much lesser extent, the east bench, during seismic operations.

Solitude would also be diminished from the use of heavy equipment in the western and southern areas where the majority of the 11 miles of pipeline would be placed. Sights and sounds from helicopters used during construction and maintenance of the communication site on Worthington Peak would disturb the solitude of wilderness users.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude particularly along the bench areas where the majority of use is expected to occur.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Refer to the naturalness section.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of sporadic mineral and energy exploration, ORV use, and placement and maintenance of a communication site on Worthington Peak would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features: The WSA's primary special feature, Leviathan Cave, is located within the suitable portion of the WSA. Other caves in the nonsuitable portions are located in nearly impenetrable cliffs that afford them almost complete protection. Similarly, the remnant stands of bristlecone and ponderosa pine, both in the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the range, are perched in almost inaccessible areas.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres in the nonsuitable portion. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished. Designation of the suitable portion of the WSA as wilderness would preserve the outstanding wilderness values that are present, including Leviathan Cave.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 5,253-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion is identified as having a low mineral potential.

All lands within the 42,408-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 3,400 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Actual development of mineral resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion is identified as having low favorability for mineral resources and exploration or development of mineral resources is not expected within the suitable portion of the WSA. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 5,253-acre suitable portion of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire Worthington Mountains WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation.

All lands within the 42,408-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not anticipated within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within both the suitable and unsuitable portions of the Worthington Mountains WSA would not change. Only 1 mile of pipeline is proposed within the suitable portion of the WSA, and would be built in an already disturbed area. Four proposed pipelines totalling 11 miles in the unsuitable portion of the WSA would be constructed, as well as a 2-mile portion of pasture fence.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on maintenance or construction of grazing facilities.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 5,255 acres of the Worthington Mountains WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. Due to the extremely rugged terrain in the suitable portion, recreational ORV use is almost nonexistent.

The remaining 42,408 acre, unsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreational off-road vehicle use.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 47,633-acre Worthington Mountains WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: Two small mineral exploration programs would occur in the northwest corner of the WSA. Surface disturbance associated with construction of 2 miles of access and a modest drilling and trenching program would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 8 acres in the northern part of the WSA. An additional 6 acres would be disturbed on the northwest flank from 3 miles of access and eight drill pads. Due to lack of vegetative screening, these scars would be visible for long

distances. Seismic lines would leave 8 miles (16 acres) of noticeable linear tracks lasting approximately 20 years. Most of this disturbance would occur on the west bench of the WSA where the presence of numerous cherrystemmed routes already affects the perception of naturalness.

Approximately 8.5 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the berms of cherrystemmed roads. Because the pipelines would be placed within existing disturbances, there would be no impact on the natural character of the area. Two pipelines totalling 2.5 miles would be constructed outside of disturbed areas. Development activities with the use of a ripper would disturb a 12-foot swath along the pipeline route. The disturbed stretch would revegetate in about 15 years.

Construction of a 2-mile stretch of fence along the east bench would result in the formation of a primitive two-track road paralleling the fence. Although the fence itself would not create noticeable surface disturbance its presence on a fairly pristine bench would be visually very impairing.

The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridge in the WSA would affect the WSA's natural character in their vicinity. The 1,300 square foot black polyethylene apron would be visible from nearby peaks but would blend into the landscape from a distance, as would the painted water storage tanks.

The placement of communication sites atop the two highest peaks would greatly detract from hikers perceptions of naturalness. These facilities would be helicoptered in and would each physically impact a 100 x 100 foot area. Both would be visible from many portions of the WSA due to its elevated position.

Solitude: Mineral and energy exploration activities would affect the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to exploration would lower the quality of solitude on the northwest portion of the WSA for the duration of the mineral activities, and on the west bench and to much lesser extent, the east bench, during seismic operations.

Solitude would also be diminished from the use of heavy equipment in the western and southern areas where the majority of the 11 miles of pipeline would be placed. Sights and sounds from helicopters used during construction and maintenance of the communication sites would disturb visitors solitude.

Occasional off-road vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude particularly along the bench areas where the majority of use is expected to occur.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The presence of sporadic mineral and energy exploration, ORV use, and especially the placement and maintenance of a communication sites on Meeker and Worthington Peaks would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

Special Features: The WSA's primary special features are the cave resources, in particular Leviathan Cave. These caves are located in the nearly impenetrable cliffs that afford them almost complete protection. Similarly, the remnant stands of bristlecone and ponderosa pine are perched in almost inaccessible areas.

CONCLUSIONS: Long-term physical impacts to the wilderness quality of the Worthington Mountains WSA would occur on about 25 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. The wilderness values on the relatively undisturbed eastern benches would be diminished.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Worthington Mountains WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 3,400 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals in the northern part of the WSA. Development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the Worthington Mountains WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. Potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal) is considered low. Energy development is not anticipated within the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within the Worthington Mountains WSA would not change. Range developments proposed in the WSA including 11 miles of pipeline, and a 2-mile portion of a pasture fence would be built.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Worthington Mountains WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 150 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreation ORV use.

WEEPAH SPRING WSA

NV-040-246

PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness Alternative No. 1)

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 50,499 acres of the Weepah Springs WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 10,638 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Mining operations totalling 105 acres of surface disturbance in the northern portion would severely impact the natural character of the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration activities within the suitable portion of the WSA would be done with drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles using existing access and driving cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from this exploration in the western portion of the WSA would total 1 acre within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation which would involve only 79 acres of surface disturbance within the suitable portion of the WSA.

The disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development.

Surface disturbance within the suitable portion would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump and 1 mile of new road construction disturbing 7 acres. The presence of a waste dump would result in a modified landform detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

Exploration activities totalling 4 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve minimal access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20-acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .25 mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Weepah Spring would be developed with the use of heavy equipment. A 1-acre riparian fence would be constructed around spring. The natural character of the WSA would be affected because of vegetation disturbance and the presence of troughs and a fence. These impacts would be offset, however, by the reestablishment of vegetation in 3 years and the presence of an ungrazed riparian area. A 1.25 mile stretch of pipeline would be placed in the berm of an existing cherrystem route. Keno Spring would also be developed but without the use of heavy equipment. Disturbance would be slightly less than mentioned above for Weepah Spring.

The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in their immediate vicinity. The guzzlers would be buried, camouflaged, and not visible for any distance.

Naturalness would be benefited by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development within the suitable area. There would be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Naturalness would also be benefited by the prohibition of communication site placement and absence of new range developments.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Mining operations totalling 157 acres of surface disturbance in the northern portion would severely impact the natural character of the nonsuitable portion.

Four acres would be disturbed along the northwest bench by the construction of two miles of access road and numerous drill pads. Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation which would involve 157 acres of surface disturbance within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development.

Surface disturbance within the nonsuitable portion would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump; 2 miles of road upgrading disturbing 10 acres and 75 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities. The presence of waste dumps and leach pads would result in several modified landforms detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated on the western bench of the WSA would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and 1 mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pads may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. A total of 1 mile of vibroseis line would result in 2 acres of surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks. The tracks would remain visible for approximately 20 years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

A 1,200-acre brush conversion and a surrounding 7-mile fence would be highly visible and detract from the feeling of naturalness on the western tip. The area would be burned then seeded with crested wheatgrass using a rangeland drill. The seeding effort would result in an unnatural appearing area in comparison to the surrounding untreated area.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Mineral exploration and mining operations would negatively affect the wilderness value of solitude in the northern part of the suitable portion. During the estimated 5-15 year lifespan of the mines, sights and sounds from mining operations, the presence of traffic on roads, and creation of roads during exploration activities would combine to lower the quality of solitude in the WSA.

Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of Weepah Springs and near a wildlife guzzler during construction. Occasional vehicle use of boundary roads and 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these roads.

Solitude would be benefited within the suitable portion by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development. There would be a positive effect on solitude by closure of the suitable portion to off-road vehicle use. The absence of additional range developments and a communication site would benefit solitude.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Solitude in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be affected by the disturbances from the same mining operations, as well as by energy exploration on the west bench. Occasional off-road vehicle use would also detract from the feeling of solitude within the nonsuitable portion, as would the construction and maintenance of several range developments.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Primitive and unconfined recreation would be adversely affected by the extensive mining and exploration activities in the northern portion of the WSA.

The slight reduction of mineral and energy activity, the curtailment of numerous range developments and ORV use, and the prohibition of a communication site facility would all enhance the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of intense mineral activities, energy exploration, and a fenced seeding would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The opportunities would be lost in the northwest portion.

Special Features: Special features in the WSA consist of large ponderosa pine stands, numerous aboriginal petroglyph sites, including a National Register District, a wild horse herd, and high scenic values attributable to a great diversity of geologic features. The National Register District would receive additional protection provided by wilderness designation. The ponderosa pine and high scenic values would mostly be preserved by wilderness designation although some would be lost in areas adjacent to

active mining. There is a high potential for undiscovered aboriginal petroglyph sites which could be adversely affected by the active mining and limited exploration that would occur. The wild horse herd would be temporarily displaced by active mining operations.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 50,499-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 5,200 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. The remainder of the area is identified as having a low potential for metallic minerals. Exploration and development of mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration and development activities would total 347 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This disturbance would be reduced to 105 acres due to tighter wilderness restrictions should the suitable portion be designated as wilderness. Surface disturbance associated with exploration and development activities would include open pits, waste dumps, haul roads and drill roads. The leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located either outside of the WSA or in the nonsuitable portion.

All lands within the 10,638-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 3,500 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 347 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the development of mineral resources within the nonsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 50,499-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion of the WSA has been identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation.

All lands within the 10,638-acre nonsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. The entire nonsuitable portion of the WSA has been identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, geothermal). Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or nonsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments both in the suitable and nonsuitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would not change.

Range developments to be built in the suitable portion of the WSA include a spring development at Keno Spring and redevelopment of Weepah Spring including a new 1.5 mile pipeline. A 1-mile riparian enclosure would also be built at Weepah Spring. A .25-mile tie-off fence would be constructed. Several projects would not be allowed. These include a .5-mile tie-off fence, 8 miles of pasture fence, and three pipelines totalling about 13 miles.

In the nonsuitable portion of the WSA a 1,200-acre, fenced, brush removal and seeding would occur.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight and one-half miles of fence and three pipelines totalling 13 miles would not be constructed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 50,499 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 7 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of 125 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the nonsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 10,638-acre, nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 125 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

ADVERSE IMPACTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

On the 50,499 acres designated as wilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be the withdrawal of the suitable portion to all forms of mineral entry and leasing.

On the 10,638 acres designated as nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with the loss of wilderness values from energy and mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved notices of intent, plans of operation, and environmental assessments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

On the 50,499 acres designated as wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 10,638 acres designated as nonwilderness, all present uses would continue. Mineral and energy exploration and development, intensive range developments, and off-road vehicle use would reduce wilderness values in the long-term.

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

On the 50,499 acres designated as wilderness, irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is not expected, except in areas of valid mineral discoveries.

On the 10,638 acres designated as nonwilderness, mineral and energy exploration and development and seedings would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation.

Naturalness: Mining operations totalling 187 acres of surface disturbance in the northern portion would severely impact the natural character, in the area of the mining.

On the lower more accessible slopes of the WSA's west bench, drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles could be used on existing access and cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from this exploration in this area would total five acres.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development. Development of the heap leach operation would involve only 161 acres of surface disturbance within the WSA boundary. Surface disturbance would include two 30-acre open pits with 84 acres of associated waste dumps; 2 miles of major road upgrading, and 1 mile of new road construction totalling 17 acres. Leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities totalling 75 acres would be located outside of the WSA boundary. The presence of waste dumps would result in several modified landforms detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

Exploration activities totalling 4 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve limited access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20-acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .5-mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

WEEPAH SPRING

Weepah Spring would be developed with the use of heavy equipment. A 1-acre riparian fence would be constructed around spring. The natural character of the WSA would be affected because of vegetation disturbance and the presence of troughs and a fence. These impacts would be offset, however, by the reestablishment of vegetation in 3 years and the presence of an ungrazed riparian area. A 1.25 mile stretch of pipeline would be placed in the berm of an existing cherrystem route. Keno Spring would also be developed but without the use of heavy equipment. Disturbance would be slightly less than mentioned above for Weepah Spring.

The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in their immediate vicinity. The guzzlers would be buried, camouflaged, and not visible for any distance.

Naturalness would be benefited by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development within the suitable area. There would be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Naturalness would also be benefited by the prohibition of communication site placement and absence of new range developments.

Solitude: Mineral exploration and mining operations would negatively affect the wilderness value of solitude in the northern portion of the WSA. During the estimated 5-15 year lifespan of the mines, sights and sounds from mining operations, the presence of traffic on roads, and creation of roads during exploration activities would combine to lower the quality of solitude in the vicinity of the mining.

Solitude would be diminished in the vicinity of Weepah Springs and near a wildlife guzzler during construction and maintenance visits. Occasional vehicle use of boundary roads and 8.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these roads.

Solitude would be benefited within the WSA by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development. There would be a positive effect on solitude by closure of the suitable portion to off-road vehicle use. The absence of additional range developments and a communication site would benefit solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Primitive and unconfined recreation would be adversely affected by the extensive mining and exploration activities in the northern portion of the WSA in the vicinity of the mining.

The slight reduction of mineral and energy activity, the curtailment of numerous range developments and ORV use, and the prohibition of a communication site facility would all enhance the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Special Features: Special features in the WSA consist of large ponderosa pine stands, numerous aboriginal petroglyph sites, including a National Register District, a wild horse herd, and high scenic values attributable to a great diversity of geologic features. The National Register District would receive additional protection from wilderness designation. The ponderosa pines and high scenic values would mostly be preserved by wilderness designation although some would be lost in areas adjacent to active mining. There is a high potential for undiscovered aboriginal petroglyph sites which could be adversely affected by the active mining and limited exploration that would occur. The wild horse herd would be temporarily displaced by active mining operations. Long-term physical impacts would occur on 190 acres of the Weepah Springs WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: The impact of designation of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, the National Register District, high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 8,700 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals located in the northern portion of the WSA. Exploration and development of mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. The 504 acres of surface disturbance associated with mineral exploration and development expected to occur without wilderness designation would be reduced to 187 acres as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. Surface disturbance associated with mineral development and exploration activities would include open pits, waste dumps, and haul roads, as well as limited access construction and drill pads, leach pads, processing and support facilities and some waste dumps would be located outside of the WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the WSA. The 504 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 187 acres if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be located outside of the WSA to minimize impacts on the wilderness values.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the WSA. The entire area is identified as having low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal).

WEEPAH SPRING

The exploratory oil and gas well and the 1 mile of vibroseis line anticipated to occur without wilderness designation would be eliminated as a result of tighter wilderness restrictions. The 1 mile of seismic line would be accomplished on foot.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would be withdrawn from mineral leasing. The one exploratory well expected without wilderness designation would be foregone and the 1 mile of seismic exploration would have to be accomplished on foot. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development is not expected to take place.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of existing range developments within the Weepah Springs WSA would not change.

Range developments proposed for the Weepah Springs WSA include a spring development at Keno Spring and redevelopment of the Weepah Spring pipeline. An acre riparian enclosure would be built. A .25-mile tie-off fence would be constructed. A wildlife guzzler in the southern portion of the WSA would also be built. A total of 13 miles of proposed pipeline and 8.5 miles of proposed fenceline would not be built. A 1,200-acre, fenced, brush removal and seeding would not be allowed.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Two pasture fences, a seeding, and four water developments would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated distribution would be foregone.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 8.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Actual off-road recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of 200 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE NO. 2

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under this alternative, 33,873 acres of the Weepah Springs WSA would receive special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The remaining 27,264 acres would receive no special protection.

Naturalness (Suitable Portion): Mining operations totalling 105 acres of surface disturbance in the northern portion would severely impact the natural character of the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration activities within the suitable portion of the WSA would be done with drill rigs mounted on rubber tired vehicles using existing access and driving cross-country. Only very limited access and drill pad construction would be allowed. Exploration in areas with no vehicular access would be conducted by helicopter with portable drills. Surface disturbance from this exploration in area would total 1 acre within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation which would involve only 79 acres of surface disturbance within the suitable portion of the WSA. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development. Surface disturbance within the suitable portion would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump and 1 mile of new road construction disturbing 7 acres. The presence of a waste dump would result in a modified landform detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

Exploration activities totalling four acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve minimal access and some drill pad construction. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of a small heap leach operation totalling 22 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. The mine located just inside the WSA boundary would include a 20-acre open pit and 2 acres of surface disturbance associated with a .25-mile haul road. The remaining disturbance including waste dumps, leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located just outside the WSA boundary. Three of the acres disturbed from exploration activities would be consumed by the resulting mining operation.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Weepah Spring would be developed with the use of heavy equipment. A 1-acre riparian fence would be constructed around spring. The natural character of the WSA would be impacted because of vegetation disturbance and the presence of troughs and a fence. These would be offset, however, by the reestablishment of vegetation in 3 years and the presence of an ungrazed

riparian area. A 1.25-mile stretch of pipeline would be placed in the berm of an existing cherrystem route. Keno Spring would also be developed but without the use of heavy equipment. Disturbance would be slightly less than mentioned above for Weepah Spring.

The placement of one bighorn sheep guzzler along the ridgeline would slightly affect the WSA's natural character in its immediate vicinity. The guzzler would be buried, camouflaged, and not visible for any distance.

Naturalness would be benefited by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development within the suitable area. There would be a slight positive affect on naturalness with the closure of the suitable portion of the WSA to off-road vehicles, which would halt the formation of new two-wheel tracks associated with repeated off-road use. Naturalness would also be benefited by the prohibition of communication site placement and absence of new range developments.

Naturalness (Nonsuitable Portion): Mining operations totalling 197 acres of surface disturbance in the northern portion would severely impact the natural character of the nonsuitable portion.

Four acres would be disturbed along the northwest bench by the construction of 2 miles of access road and numerous drill pads. Exploration efforts in this area would lead to the development of a 236-acre open pit-heap leach operation which would involve 157 acres of surface disturbance within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. Most of the disturbance from exploration would be consumed in the resulting mineral development. Surface disturbance within the nonsuitable portion, would include one 30-acre open pit with a 42-acre waste dump; 2 miles of road upgrading disturbing 10 acres and 75 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, processing and support facilities. The presence of waste dumps and leach pads would result in several modified landforms detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

On the east side of the nonsuitable portion; a 40-acre gravel pit serving Highway 318 would be developed. Naturalness would be slightly affected by the presence of an unnatural depression devoid of native vegetation.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated on the western bench of the WSA would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and one mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pads may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. A total of 1 mile of vibroseis line would result in 2 acres of surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks. The tracks would remain visible for approximately 20 years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

Several range developments would affect the area's naturalness. Approximately 6 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the nonsuitable portion of the WSA. These would be placed in previously undisturbed areas and approximately 12 acres of disturbance would result during construction. A 12-foot swath along the pipeline route would have vegetation removed. Revegetation would take approximately 8 years due to the dry climate. The construction of a short tie-off fence would be visible and would result in primitive two-track routes being formed during construction and maintenance.

A 1,200-acre brush conversion and a surrounding 4-mile fence would be highly visible and detract from the feeling of naturalness on the western tip.

The area would be burned then seeded with crested wheatgrass using a rangeland drill. The seeding effort would result in an area appearing unnatural in comparison to the surrounding untreated area.

The placement of two bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridge in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would affect the WSA's natural character in their vicinity. The 1,300 square foot black polyethylene apron would be visible from nearby peaks but would blend into the landscape from a distance, as would the painted water storage tanks.

Solitude (Suitable Portion): Mineral exploration and mining operations would negatively affect the wilderness value of solitude in the northern part of the suitable portion. During the estimated 5-15 year lifespan of the mines, sights and sounds from mining operations, the presence of traffic on roads, and creation of roads during exploration activities would combine to lower the quality of solitude in the WSA.

Solitude would also be diminished in the vicinity of Keno and Weepah Springs during construction and maintenance visits. Occasional vehicle use of boundary roads and 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would detract from the feeling of solitude for visitors near these roads.

Solitude would be benefited within the suitable portion by the slight curtailment of mineral and energy exploration and development. There would be a positive effect on solitude by closure of the suitable portion to off-road vehicle use. The absence of additional range developments and a communication site would benefit solitude.

Solitude (Nonsuitable Portion): Solitude in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would be affected by the disturbances from the same mining operations, as well as by energy exploration on the west bench. Occasional off-road vehicle use would also detract from the feeling of solitude within the nonsuitable portion, as would the construction and maintenance of several range developments.

Sporadic use of a 40-acre gravel pit on the east side of the WSA would affect solitude when heavy equipment is being used to extract gravel.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Suitable Portion): Primitive and unconfined recreation would be adversely affected by the extensive mining and exploration activities in the northern 20 percent of the WSA.

The slight reduction of mineral and energy activity, the curtailment of numerous range developments and ORV use, and the prohibition of a communication site facility would all enhance the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation (Nonsuitable Portion): The presence of intense mineral activities, energy exploration, and numerous range developments would diminish opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. These opportunities would be lost in the northwest portion.

Special Features: Special features in the suitable portion of the WSA consist of large ponderosa pine stands, a wild horse herd, and high scenic values attributable to a great diversity of geologic features. The ponderosa pines, high scenic values would partially be preserved by wilderness designation although some would be lost in areas adjacent to active mining. There is a high potential for undiscovered aboriginal petroglyph sites which could be adversely affected by the active mining and limited exploration that would occur in the suitable portion of the WSA. The wild horse herd would be temporarily displaced by active mining operations.

The numerous aboriginal petroglyph sites, including a National Register District, and many of the area's highly scenic geologic features are located in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA and would receive no additional wilderness protection. With the exception of a 6-mile pipeline, no surface disturbing activities are anticipated which would adversely affect these resources.

CONCLUSIONS: The result of designation of the suitable portion of the Weepah Springs WSA as wilderness would be to preserve the naturalness and excellent opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, some of the high scenic values, and the ponderosa pine stands. In much of the suitable northern portion of the WSA, the wilderness values would be severely impaired near active mining operations.

Long-term physical impacts to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would occur on approximately 1,400 acres. Impacts to the visitor's perception of wilderness values, however, would be much greater than the acreage implies due to the open, sparsely vegetated nature of the area. This would be especially true on the west side of the WSA.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 33,873-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry. Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. This includes approximately 5,900 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. The remainder of the

area is identified as having a low potential. Exploration and development of mineral resources on valid existing claims would be done in a manner that minimizes impacts on the wilderness resource while protecting the rights of the operator. Without wilderness designation, surface disturbing exploration and development activities would total 307 acres within the suitable portion of the WSA. This disturbance would be reduced to 105 acres due to tighter wilderness restrictions should the suitable portion be designated as wilderness. Surface disturbance associated with mining development and exploration activities would include open pits, waste dumps, haul roads and drill roads. The leach pads, processing and support facilities would be located either outside of the WSA or in the unsuitable portion.

All lands within the 27,264-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 2,800 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals.

CONCLUSIONS: Exploration and development of mineral resources would be foregone on all unclaimed lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The 307 acres of surface disturbing exploration and development activity expected if designation does not occur would be reduced to 105 acres within the suitable portion if designation occurs. Mining facilities would be placed outside of the suitable portion to minimize impacts to the wilderness resource. All lands within the unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources within the unsuitable portion.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the 33,873-acre suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral leasing. Exploration and development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. The entire suitable portion of the WSA is considered to have low potential for energy resources (oil, gas, and geothermal). Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation.

All lands within the 27,264-acre unsuitable portion of the WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. All potential energy resources would be available for exploration and development. The entire unsuitable portion is considered to have low potential for energy resources. Actual development of energy resources is not anticipated within either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: Development of energy resources would be foregone on all unleased lands within the suitable portion of the WSA. Exploration is not expected to occur within the suitable portion of the WSA regardless of wilderness designation. Favorability for development of energy resources is low within the WSA and development of energy resources is not expected to take place in either the suitable or unsuitable portions of the WSA. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources in the unsuitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within both the suitable and nonsuitable portions of the Weepah Spring WSA would not change.

Range developments to be built in the suitable portion of the Weepah Spring WSA include a spring development at Keno Spring and redeveloping Weepah Spring with a 1.5-mile pipeline. A 1-mile riparian enclosure would also be built. A .25-mile tie-off fence would be constructed. Several projects would not be allowed. These include 8 miles of fence and two pipelines totalling about 7 miles.

In the nonsuitable portion, 6 miles of pipelines, a .75-mile tie-off fence, and a 1,200-acre, fenced, brush removal and seeding would take place. A wildlife guzzler would also be constructed in the nonsuitable portion without wilderness restrictions.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance. Eight miles of fence and two water developments (pipelines) would not be allowed. Current grazing management would not be affected by the absence of these developments. In the long-term, intensified grazing management and associated water distribution would be foregone within the suitable portion of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Under this alternative, 33,873 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA would be closed to all forms of recreational ORV use. The boundary roads and 2.5 miles of cherrystemmed routes would continue to provide vehicular access into the WSA. Estimated off-road recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA. Hunters using vehicles off existing roads would be the main recreational user group affected since little other off-road use occurs. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Recreational ORV use foregone in the suitable portion of the WSA would be absorbed on the nonsuitable portion and on surrounding public lands.

The remaining 27,264-acre, nonsuitable portion of the WSA would continue to remain open for recreational ORV use as designated in the Schell MFP.

CONCLUSIONS: Recreational ORV use of fewer than 50 visitor days annually would be foregone. The impacts of shifting this use to the nonsuitable portion of the WSA or to other public lands would be negligible.

NO WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The entire 61,137-acre Weepah Springs WSA would not be designated as wilderness and would receive no special legislative protection.

Naturalness: Extensive mining operations totalling 504 acres would essentially eliminate the WSA's naturalness in the northern portion of the WSA.

Exploration activities would total 30 acres and the surface disturbance associated with the exploration would include approximately 5 miles of access, drill pad construction, and trenching. The exploration would result in the development of a 325-acre heap-leach operation. Exploration disturbance would eventually be consumed with development of the mine.

The heap-leach operation would involve 100 acres for leach pads, solution ponds, process and support facilities; 90 acres for three 30-acre open pits, and 125 acres for associated waste dumps. Access to the mine would involve 10 acres of surface disturbance, including upgrading access created by prior exploration activities and haul road access connecting the open pits to the processing facilities. The presence of waste dumps and leach pads would result in several modified landforms detracting from the natural character of the landscape.

Exploration activities totalling 20 acres in the eastern portion of the WSA would involve access, drill pad construction, and trenching. Exploration efforts would lead to the development of two modest heap leach operation totalling 120 acres. Surface disturbance created by previous exploration would be consumed in the resulting mine operations. Surface disturbance for each mine would include a 20-acre open pit, a 30-acre waste dump, and 10 acres each for processing and support facilities.

In addition to the above exploration and development, 16 acres of surface disturbance associated with satellite exploration efforts would occur involving 10 acres of drill pads and access near the large mine and 3 acres each for the small operations. Construction of drill pads and access would result in localized areas of scarified topography which would last many years.

Small scale production of mercury is anticipated to resume on the Red Head claim block located adjacent to and just within the northern boundary of the suitable portion of the WSA. Surface disturbance totalling 21 acres would involve 15 acres for an open pit and waste dump and 6 acres for processing and support facilities. Most of this disturbance would occur just outside the WSA. Approximately 3 acres of surface disturbance from an open pit would take place within the WSA boundary.

Surface disturbance from development of a 40-acre gravel pit is anticipated to occur on the east side of the WSA to serve Highway 318.

An exploratory oil and gas well anticipated on the western bench of the WSA would physically disturb and impair the natural character of 5 acres. Surface disturbance would result from a 3-acre well pad stripped of vegetation and topsoil and 1 mile of access construction. The well pad would be reclaimed and restored to a natural condition in 8 years. Depending on the slope of the drill site, the well pad may result in a slightly modified landform which would essentially blend with the natural landscape after revegetation. A total of 1 mile of vibroseis line would result in 2 acres of surface disturbance in the form of visible linear tracks. The tracks would remain visible for approximately 5 years, by which time vegetation would be restored to a natural condition.

Numerous range developments would affect the area's naturalness. Approximately 14.25 miles of pipeline would be constructed within the WSA. Nearly 6 miles would be placed along cherrystemmed roads and would have little effect on naturalness. The remaining 8.5 miles would be placed in previously undisturbed areas and approximately 16 acres of disturbance would result during construction. A 12-foot swath along the pipeline route would be disturbed. Revegetation would take approximately 15 years due to the dry climate. The construction of an 8-mile pasture fence would affect naturalness only in its immediate vicinity. The fence would be well screened by topography. The two short tie-off fences would be more visible and would result in primitive two-track routes being formed.

A 1,200-acre brush conversion and a surrounding 7-mile fence would be highly visible and detract from the feeling of naturalness on the western tip. The area would be burned then seeded with crested wheatgrass using a rangeland drill. The seeding effort would result in an area appearing unnatural in comparison to the surrounding untreated area.

Two spring developments would be constructed within the WSA. The use of a backhoe and bulldozer would have both short-term and long-term effects on the natural character of the WSA in the vicinity of the springs because of vegetation disturbance. Within 3 years of development, vegetation would become reestablished. Structures associated with the spring developments such as troughs and a 1-acre fenced riparian enclosure would detract slightly from the natural character of the area. This would be offset by the presence of ungrazed riparian areas.

The placement of three bighorn sheep guzzlers along the ridge in the nonsuitable portion of the WSA would affect the WSA's natural character in their vicinity. The 1,300 square foot black polyethylene apron would be visible from nearby peaks but would blend into the landscape from a distance, as would the painted water storage tanks.

The placement of a communication site atop the highest peak in the WSA would detract from hiker's perceptions of naturalness. This facility would be helicoptered in and would physically impact a 100 x 100 foot area by clearing off all vegetation. The facility would be visible from many portions of the WSA due to its elevated position.

Solitude: Extensive mineral exploration and mining operations as well as oil and gas exploration would adversely affect the wilderness value of solitude in the northern 25 percent of the WSA. During the estimated 5-15 year lifespan of the mines, sights and sounds from mining operations, the presence of heavy traffic on roads, and creation of roads during exploration activities would all combine to greatly lower the quality of solitude.

Solitude would be diminished in the vicinity of the two spring developments and areas of fence construction and also during subsequent maintenance visits.

Occasional vehicle use would detract from the feeling of solitude, as would the sound of helicopters during placement and maintenance of the communication facility.

Sporadic use of a 40-acre gravel pit on the east side of the WSA would affect solitude when heavy equipment is being used to extract gravel.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Primitive and unconfined recreation would be adversely affected in the vicinity of the extensive mining and exploration activities. These wilderness values would also be affected slightly near areas of proposed range developments, communication site placement, and occasional ORV use throughout the WSA.

Special Features: Special features in the WSA consist of large ponderosa pine stands, numerous aboriginal petroglyph sites, including a National Register District, a wild horse herd, and high scenic values attributable to its great diversity of geologic features. The National Register District would be largely unaffected by extensive mineral development and exploration. There is high potential for undiscovered aboriginal petroglyph sites which could be adversely affected by mineral development and exploration. The wild horse herd would be temporarily displaced in the northern portion of the WSA by continuing mining operations. High scenic values in the northern portion of the WSA would be lost as would some of the ponderosa pines. Long-term physical impacts would occur on 1,700 acres of the Weepah Spring WSA.

CONCLUSIONS: The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation would be lost in the northern portion of the Weepah Springs WSA. These wilderness values would also be affected to a much lesser degree throughout the WSA near range developments and by occasional ORV use. High scenic values in the northern portion of the WSA would be lost.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Weepah Springs WSA would remain open for mineral entry. All potential mineral resources would be available for exploration and development. This includes 8,700 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals in the northern part of the WSA. Extensive mineral development is anticipated to occur within the northern portion of the WSA.

WEEPAH SPRING

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral entry. There would be no impacts on the exploration and development of mineral resources.

Impacts on the Exploration and Development of Energy Resources

All lands within the Weepah Springs WSA would remain open for mineral leasing. Energy development is not anticipated within the WSA as a result of exploration.

CONCLUSIONS: All lands within the WSA would remain open to mineral leasing. There would be no impacts on the exploration or development of energy resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing range developments within the Weepah Springs WSA would not change. Range developments including 14.25 miles of pipeline, 9 miles of fence, a 1,200-acre fenced seeding, two spring developments, and a 1-acre riparian enclosure, would all be built.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact on the maintenance and construction of grazing facilities.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Weepah Springs WSA would remain open to ORV use as designated in the Scheil MFP. Recreational ORV use would remain below 200 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS: There would be no impact to recreation ORV use.

CHAPTER 5

Consultation and Coordination

INTRODUCTION

This Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement for the Schell Resource Area has been prepared by specialists from the Ely District Office with assistance from personnel in the Las Vegas District Office and the Nevada State Office. The entire wilderness review process has involved public participation since its initiation in 1978. The process included inventories of resources, public participation, and coordination with individuals, organizations, and other agencies. Care has been exercised to ensure that the public has been consulted and informed throughout the wilderness review process.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Development of the recommendations for the Schell Wilderness Final Environmental Impact Statement included on-going coordination and public participation. Federal Register notices and news releases announced all steps of the process to date, including the study schedule, notices of intent for preparation of the Schell Management Framework Plan Amendment/Wilderness Final Environmental Impact Statement, notice of availability of the Plan Amendment/EIS, notice of public hearings, and public comment periods.

The Draft EIS was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on April 8, 1983. A BLM notice announcing the availability of the Draft EIS was also published on April 8, 1983, in the Federal Register (Volume 48, No. 69). This notice announced that the review period ended July 8, 1983, and listed the dates and locations of the three public hearings in Reno, Ely, and Pioche.

Over 400 copies of the Draft EIS were distributed to reviewing agencies, elected officials and interested publics. Reading copies of the Draft EIS were sent to public libraries and to BLM offices in Nevada and Utah. News releases were issued to the local and regional news media.

Throughout the study, consultation and coordination took place with other federal agencies; state, county, and local governments; and the public. The Schell Draft Wilderness EIS was mailed out to the persons on the wilderness mailing list in April 1983. Due to the size of the mailing list (over 400), the following is only a partial list of those contacted.

Federal Agencies

- * Department of the Air Force
- Department of the Interior
 - * Bureau of Indian Affairs
 - * Bureau of Land Management
 - * Bureau of Mines
 - * Bureau of Reclamation
 - Minerals Management Service
 - * National Park Service
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- ** U.S. Geological Survey
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- Federal Highway Administration
- * U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Forest Service

Local Agencies

- Ely City Council
- Lincoln County Commission
- * Lincoln County Conservation District
- Nye County Commission
- Preston/Lund Town Council
- White Pine Chamber of Commerce
- White Pine County Commission
- White Pine County Conservation District
- White Pine County Extension Service

Organizations/Companies

- American Assoc. of Petroleum Geologists
- * American Wilderness Alliance
- AMSELCO Exploration Inc.
- Anaconda Minerals Co.
- Animal Protection Institute
- * Atlantic Richfield Co.
- Audubon Society
- Bear Creek Mining Co.
- Boundy & Foreman, Inc.
- * California Association of 4WD Clubs
- Chevron USA, Inc.
- * Committee for Idaho's High Desert
- Conservation Call
- * Defenders of Wildlife
- Ducks Unlimited

Nevada State Agencies

Nevada Bureau of Mines
Nevada Department of Agriculture
Nevada Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources
Nevada Department of Transportation
Nevada Department of Wildlife

Native American Councils

Duckwater Tribal Council
Ely Indian Colony
Intertribal Council
National American Indian Center

BLM Advisory Councils

Ely District Advisory Council
Ely District Grazing Board
White Pine County CRMP Committee

Public Libraries

White Pine, Lincoln, and
Nye County Libraries
Nevada State Library
University of Nevada Library

* A written response was received and is published in the following section.

** No written response was received, but a telephone confirmation is in the files stating the agency had no comments.

- * Eastern Nevada Trappers and Furtakers, Assoc.
- * Ecology Center of Southern California
- Environmental Forum
- Exxon Minerals Co.
- Freeport Exploration Co.
- Freiburg Mines, Inc.
- Gem and Mineral Societies
- Grazing Permittees
- High Desert Grotto
- Homestake Mining Co.
- Houston International Minerals Corp.
- * Humane Society of Southern Nevada
- Independent Petroleum Assoc. of America
- Inspiration Development Co.
- Interested individuals
- Kennecott Copper Corp.
- Kerr-McGee Corp.
- * LA Department of Water and Power
- Laconda Mining Inc.
- * Minerals Exploration Coalition
- * National Audubon Society
- National Resource Defense Council
- * Natural Area Council
- Nevada Cattlemen's Assoc.
- Nevada Miners & Prospectors Assoc.
- Nevada Mining Assoc.
- * Nevada Outdoor Recreation Assoc.
- Nevada Prospectors Assoc.
- Nevada Wilderness Assoc.
- Nevada Woolgrowers Assoc.
- Noranda Exploration Inc.
- Occidental Minerals Corp.
- ORV Clubs
- Phillips Petroleum Co.
- Placid Oil Co.
- Placer-Amex
- * Public Lands Institute
- Sierra Club
- * Sierra Pacific Power Co.
- So. California Edison Co.
- Superior Oil
- U.S. Borax
- Valdez Mine & Milling, Inc.
- * Waters and Wildlands Ed. Institute
- White Pine Sportsmen's Club
- Wild Horse Organized Assist.
- The Wilderness Society
- * The Wildlife Society
- Women in Mining

- * A written response was received and is published in the following section.

- ** No written response was received, but a telephone confirmation is in the files stating the agency had no comments.

Elected Representatives

State

Assemblyman Getto
Senator Blakemore
Governor Richard Bryan

Federal

Representative Barbara Vucanovich
Senator Chic Hecht
Senator Paul Laxalt

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS

Federal Agencies

The Proposed Action does not conflict with any known plan of any Federal agency.

State Agencies

The Proposed Action does not conflict with any known State plans. The Nevada Division of State Parks supports wilderness designation as being consistent with their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

County Governments

White Pine, Lincoln, and Nye Counties have adopted Policy Plans for Public Lands. These plans generally encourage and stress multiple use of the public lands but regard wilderness designation as a single use which does not allow for the multiple use type of management which they would prefer.

All three county plans encourage agricultural development and request that the Federal Government preserve and promote agricultural pursuits. This is generally compatible with wilderness designation. The Lincoln County Plan, however, states that, "Range improvement projects should be developed to improve grazing." Wilderness designation could put some restrictions on the type and manner of construction of range developments within designated wilderness. There may be some range improvements in Lincoln County which would be foregone because of wilderness designation. While this will technically conflict with the Lincoln County Plan, range developments can be implemented in the majority of the county, and depending on the specific project, may be implemented within the wilderness areas as well.

All three county plans encourage the promotion and expansion of mining exploration and development. This is a potential conflict with wilderness designation in that mineral development would be confined to areas with valid and existing rights. In addition, new mining claims would not be allowed.

All three county plans state that wilderness should only be designated where its values would outweigh other resource values and uses which would be foregone. The Lincoln County Plan further states that, "It is generally felt that there are no areas suitable for wilderness designation in Lincoln County." Wilderness designation would be inconsistent with this section of the Lincoln County Plan.

Wilderness designation would be in compliance with the majority of policy statements for Federal lands of the three counties. All of the counties expressed interest in introducing bighorn sheep and elk. Some of the counties specify existing WSA's as suitable habitat for these introductions. This would be allowed within designated wilderness.

All three county plans recognize that outdoor recreation opportunities play an important part in the lifestyles and economy in the county; backcountry-type dispersed and unstructured recreational activities are to be provided and encouraged. This is also compatible with wilderness designation.

Native Americans

Representatives of Native American groups in Ely, Duckwater, and Elko have been invited to comment and to attend public wilderness meetings throughout the review process. The Bureau knows of no conflicts between wilderness designation and Native American traditional or religious uses of the land.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

A total of 46 written comments were received on the Schell draft Wilderness EIS. All of the letters received have been printed in their entirety in this chapter.

Three public hearings were held during the public review period on the Draft EIS. The first was in Reno, Nevada, on May 16, 1983. Oral statements were presented by 10 people. One oral statement was read into the record at the hearing in Ely, Nevada, on May 17, 1983. Two people presented oral testimony at the third hearing in Pioche, Nevada, on May 18, 1983.

All letters and testimonies were reviewed carefully and printed in their entirety. Substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts and/or analyses or commented on issues bearing directly on the Draft EIS were fully evaluated and given responses.

The letters and testimonies printed in the next section are grouped as follows: federal agencies, state/local agencies, organizations/companies, and individuals. The numbers in the left margins adjacent to each issue addressed refer to numbered responses following each document. Each letter and testimony was addressed individually in this manner. Comments from the Nevada State Clearinghouse were counted as one letter although they were composed of the individual agency comments. Table 12 contains a list of all comment numbers and corresponding names.

TABLE 12

LIST OF COMMENTORS

LETTERS

<u>Comment No.</u>	<u>Commentor</u>
--------------------	------------------

Federal Agencies

1	Department of the Air Force
2	Bureau of Indian Affairs
3	Bureau of Mines
4	Bureau of Reclamation
5	Fish and Wildlife Service
6	Environmental Protection Agency
7	National Park Service

State/Local Agencies

8	Nevada State Clearinghouse
9	Lincoln County Conservation District

Organizations/Companies

10	American Wilderness Association
11	Atlantic Richfield Company
12	California Association of 4WD Clubs Inc.
13	Committee for Idaho's High Desert
14	Conservation Call
15	Defenders of Wildlife
16	Eastern Nevada Trappers and Furtakers, Association
17	Ecology Center of Southern California
18	Humane Society of Southern Nevada
19	Minerals Exploration Coalition
20	National Audubon Society
21	Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
22	Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
23	Natural Area Council
24	Public Lands Institute
25	Sierra Pacific Power Company
26	Waters and Wildlands Educational Institute
27	White Pine Power Project
28	The Wildlife Society

Individuals

29	Harriet Allen
30	Howard G. Booth
31	Eslie E. Cann
32	Jeffrey Crock
33	Harold Dittmer
34	Bart Koehler
35	William R. Meiners
36	Orren Nash
37	Frank Norris
38	Marta Porter
39	Donald W. Sada
40	Mr. and Mr. Cap Schoenfelder
41	Reed Secord
42	Kevin Shea
43	Jeffery J. Smith
44	Charles H. Stoddard
45	Phyllis Tichinin
46	Francis M. Wheat

ORAL TESTIMONY

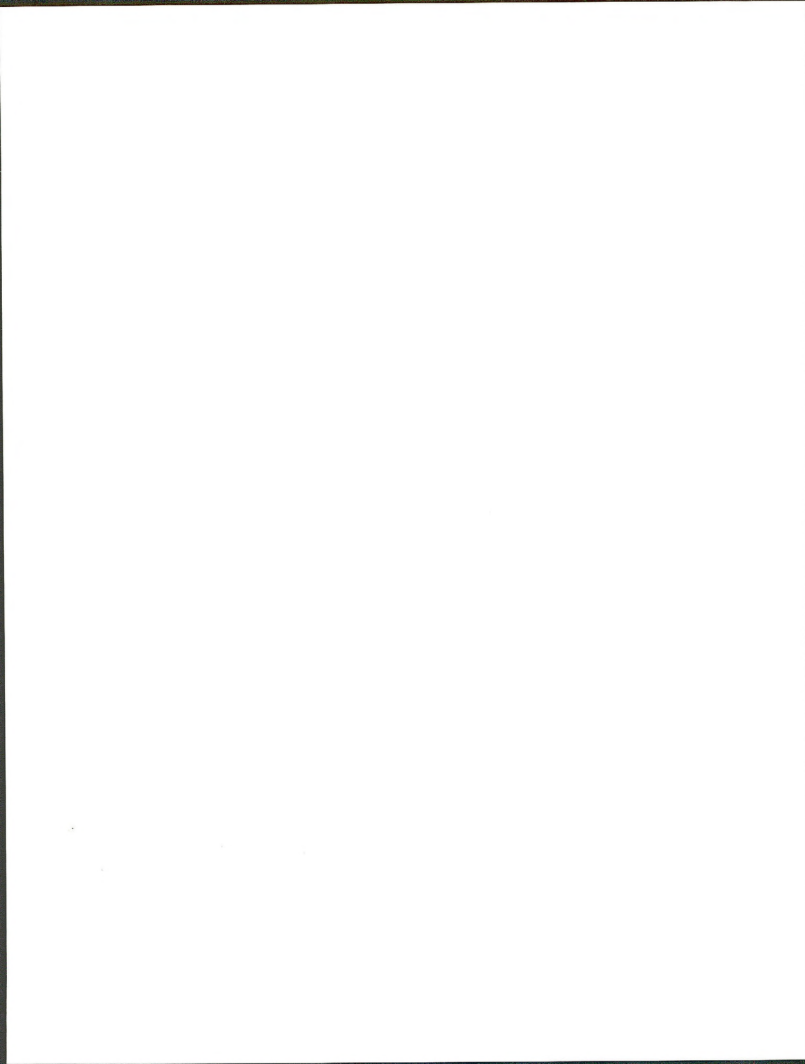
Comment No. CommentorOrganizations/Companies

1	Nevada Mining Association
2	Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
3	Nevada Wilderness Association
4	Sierra Club (Toiyabe Chapter)

Individuals

5	Dennis Chiglieri
6	Max McCroskey
7	Glenn Miller
8	Kirk Peterson
9	Marjorie Sill
10	Connie Simkins
11	Ross Smith
12	Rose Strickland
13	Karen Tanner

WRITTEN TESTIMONY



COMMENT LETTER 1



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS USAF TACTICAL FIGHTER WEAPONS CENTER (TAC)
WALLACE AIR FORCE BASE, WY 82411

26 April 1983

Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr DeSpain

This letter responds to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement of the Schell Resource Area. Nellis AFB fully supports the goals of the Wilderness Act of 1964. However, we are also committed to certain requirements that are crucial to providing training for aircrews of the free world's forces. We believe the goals of the Wilderness Act and aircrew training are compatible, and can be accommodated on the same piece of ground and in the airspace above it.

We have reviewed the potential WSAs within the Schell Resource Area. Since we conduct our flight operations within the guidelines imposed by the Federal Aviation Administration, and because we do not consider wilderness areas to be incompatible with our flight operations, we would not interpose an objection to conversion of any of the WSAs. We would point out that we conduct intensive low level flight operations as well as some supersonic flight within the part of the Desert Military Operations Area (DMOA) that overlies the Schell Resource Area. In addition, there are some vital low altitude military training routes in other portions of the Schell Resource Area, outside of the Desert MOA. These operations are crucial to national defense, and cannot be relocated. Training of our aircrews in a simulated combat environment using realistic tactics provides them a definite advantage over any future adversary.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the issues. Department of Defense flight operations co-exist with many wilderness areas across the nation, and we note with gratification the BLM's Final Wilderness Management Policy recognizes the need for essential military training missions over wilderness areas.

Sincerely

James W. Hardy
JAMES W. HARDY, Lt Col., USAF
Chief, Air Traffic and
Airspace Coordination

Readiness is our Profession

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 1

Response Number 1

The BLM views current levels of low altitude military training as compatible with wilderness designation.

COMMENT LETTER 2



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
EASTERN NEVADA AGENCY
P. O. BOX 28
Ely, Nevada 89301

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Branch of Realty
(702) 738-5165

November 12, 1986

Shaaron Netherton
Bureau of Land Management
Ely District Office
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Subject: Shell Resource Area, Draft Wilderness EIS

Dear Ms. Netherton:

Pursuant to your request, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Nevada Agency has reviewed the Draft Shell Resource Wilderness Area, Environmental Impact Statement and have determined it to basically address all areas of concern adequately. Therefore, our office finds the subject draft statement to be acceptable.

Sincerely,

Shaaron Netherton
Superintendent

COMMENT LETTER 2

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

DATE: December 17, 1986
REPLY TO: Superintendent, Eastern Nevada Agency
ATTN: SUPERINTENDENT
SUBJECT: Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statements,
Ely District Office, Bureau of Land Management
TO: Kenneth G. Walker, District Manager
Attention: Shaaron Netherton

Pursuant to your request for review and comment for the Draft Schell Wilderness EIS, Draft Elyan Resource Management Plan/EIS, and the Elyan Wilderness Technical Report, we offer "no comment" at this time. We were concerned how this would affect some of the spiritual values and cultures and have contacted and consulted the Ely Indian Colony Council Staff for their review. In speaking with your Environmental Protection Office, we understand you are not receiving any more comments from the Tribe at this point, however, we do request that you invite any response if any, the Tribe might have.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact James Vallie of our Realty Staff at telephone number (702) 738-5165.

Shaaron Netherton

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
5010-106

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1982 O - 365-026 (5010)

COMMENT LETTER 3



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF MINES
WESTERN FIELD OPERATIONS CENTER
EAST 760 1RD AVENUE
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99202

November 25, 1986

Memorandum

To: Kenneth G. Walker, District Manager--Ely District Office,
Bureau of Land Management, Ely, Nevada

From: Supervisor--Minerals Involvement Section, Branch of Engineering
Studies

Subject: Draft Egan Resource Management Plan/EIS, Egan Wilderness Technical
Report, and Draft Schell Wilderness EIS

Thank you for seeking assurance that we have reviewed the subject documents. Our records indicate we reviewed the documents in March 1984, but inadvertently failed to relay our comment to your office. The subject documents covered mineral resources very well, and a no comment response is given.

D'Arcy P. Banister
D'Arcy P. Banister

COMMENT LETTER 4



United States Department of the Interior

~~WATER AND POWER RESOURCES SERVICE~~
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
NORTH-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
2800 COTTAGE WAY
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95825

IN REPLY
REFER TO: HP-150

MAY 23 1983

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Ely, Nevada

From: Regional Director, Sacramento, CA

Subject: Review of Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Environmental
Impact Statement (DES 83/16)

Our review of the subject document finds there will be no impact to planned or existing Bureau facilities or projects as a result of the proposed action.

We have two incidental comments, however.

1. The study identifies a substantial and undeveloped ground-water supply within the wilderness study area (p. 32), and a sport fishery within the Schell Resource Area, but primarily outside the study area (p. 32). However, there is no analysis of the impacts of possible land use changes on surface and ground-water supplies which might occur as a result of the various alternatives. Such an analysis would be useful in comparing alternative impacts.
2. There is no analysis of the impacts of possible altered surface and ground-water drainages on fish, wildlife, and flora within or adjacent to the study area. These analyses should be conducted to present a more complete study.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Gay T. Schell

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 4

Response Number 1

The ground water supply identified on page 32 of the draft document is that within the Schell Resource Area as a whole. The portion of the ground water supply available within the WSA's is small, since total WSA acreage represents only about 10 percent of the Schell Resource Area, and because the WSA's are primarily mountainous areas where ground water is least accessible.

Response Number 2

The impact topic of water quality was not carried forward for analysis in the Final EIS. The main reason the issue was not considered was because the primary influence on water quality in these WSA's, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in any of the WSA's. Wilderness designation, or lack of designation would not alter surface and ground water drainage on fish, wildlife, and flora within the study areas. Large surface disturbing activities could occur in areas not designated as wilderness but their impacts to surface and ground water drainage would be analyzed on a case by case basis in an environmental analysis for the specific project.

COMMENT LETTER 5



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
GREAT BASIN COMPLEX
4600 Kietzke Lane, Bldg. C
Reno, Nevada 89502

December 19, 1986

Memorandum

To: District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Reno, Nevada
Acting

From: Complex Manager, Reno, Nevada

Subject: Egan Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, Egan Wilderness Technical Report, and Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement

We are sorry to let you know that because of other commitments we cannot review and provide comments on the above subject document. We do, however, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on these documents, and look forward to providing input on future Bureau of Land Management planning documents.

cc: Assistant Regional Director (AFNE), Portland, Oregon
Dave Harmon, Bureau of Land Management, Reno, Nevada

COMMENT LETTER 6



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
215 Fremont Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94105

MUL ' 8 1983

Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled SHELL RESOURCE AREA WILDERNESS SUITABILITY STUDY. We have the enclosed comments regarding this DEIS.

We have classified this DEIS as Category LO-2. Definitions of the categories are provided by the enclosure. The classification and date of EPA's comments will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our public disclosure responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. Please send two copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office. If you have any questions, please contact Loretta Kahn Barsamian, Chief, EIS Review Section, at (415) 974-3188 or FTS 454-8188.

Sincerely yours,

Charles W. Murray, Jr.
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Policy, Technical, and
Resources Management

Enclosures (2)

COMMENT LETTER 6

Water Quality Comments

1. If ground water quality data is available for the Resource Area (RA), it should be evaluated and incorporated into the FEIS impact analysis. Current and future ground water monitoring efforts should be discussed, particularly in light of activities which may adversely impact this resource.
2. The Schell RA includes two outside drainage systems, the White River and the Meadow Valley Wash. The White River system contains Class A and B waters; the Meadow Valley Wash flows into the Muddy River, and ultimately into Lake Mead and the Colorado River. The water quality issues of greatest concern are those related to erosion and sedimentation from natural and man-induced causes. Downstream from the RA, the waters have experienced problems with fecal coliform bacteria, nutrients, total dissolved solids and salinity. Although the DEIS assures a thorough discussion of water quality in future individual project EIS's (p.80), the FEIS should at least briefly discuss, for all alternatives, potential water quality impacts (both beneficial and adverse) in the WSAS and downstream. Water quality should be discussed in terms of State-Federal water quality standards. In the case of non-designation, the FEIS should define what is meant by "disturbing activities" and further substantiate the grounds for concluding that "these impacts will be insignificant".
3. For areas adjacent to the RA, the FEIS should evaluate the beneficial impacts to water quality associated with wilderness designation; impacts associated with non-designation should also be considered for these areas.

COMMENT LETTER 6

EIS CATEGORY CODES

Environmental Impact of the Action

1D—Lack of Objections

EPA has no objection to the proposed action as described in the draft impact statement, or suggests only minor changes in the proposed action.

ER—Environmental Reservations

EPA has reservations concerning the environmental effects of certain aspects of the proposed action. EPA believes that further study of suggested alternatives or modifications is required and has asked the originating Federal agency to reassess these aspects.

EU—Environmentally Unsatisfactory

EPA believes that the proposed action is unsatisfactory because of its potentially harmful effect on the environment. Furthermore, the Agency believes that the potential safeguards which might be utilized may not adequately protect the environment from hazards arising from this action. The Agency recommends that alternatives to the action be analyzed further (including the possibility of no action at all).

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1—Adequate

The draft impact statement adequately sets forth the environmental impact of the proposed project or action as well as alternatives reasonably available to the project or action.

Category 2—Insufficient Information

EPA believes that the draft impact statement does not contain sufficient information to assess fully the environmental impact of the proposed project or action. However, from the information submitted, the Agency is able to make a preliminary determination of the impact on the environment. EPA has requested that the originator provide the information that was not included in the draft statement.

Category 3—Inadequate

EPA believes that the draft impact statement does not adequately assess the environmental impact of the proposed project or action, or that the statement inadequately analyzes reasonably available alternatives. The Agency has requested more information and analysis concerning the potential environmental hazards and has asked that substantial revision be made to the impact statement.

If a draft impact statement is assigned a Category 3, no rating will be made of the project or action, since a basis does not generally exist on which to make such a determination.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 6

Response Number 1

There is no systematic ground water quality data available for the Schell Resource Area, and there are no current or planned ground water monitoring efforts for the area.

Response Number 2

In the White River system, all surface water disappears just south of the Wayne E. Kirch Wildlife Refuge inside the Schell Resource Area. Main watersheds for the White River system are located north of the WSA's considered in this EIS.

Three WSA's serve as watershed for the Meadow Valley Wash system. The sources of the water quality problems in the Muddy and Colorado Rivers have not been identified with certainty. Problems with fecal coliform and nutrients are believed to come from areas downstream of the Schell Resource Area; problems with salinity and total dissolved solids could derive partly from natural erosion within the Schell Resource Area.

Response Number 3

The impact topic of water quality was not carried forward for analysis in the Final EIS. The main reason the issue was not considered was because the primary influence on water quality in these WSA's, livestock use, would not vary sufficiently with or without wilderness designation to affect water quality in any of the WSA's. Surface disturbing activities such as mining exploration or development, major road construction, or range development projects could occur in areas not designated as wilderness but their impacts to surface and ground water drainage and water quality would be analyzed on a case by case basis in an environmental analysis for the specific project.

COMMENT LETTER 7



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WESTERN REGION

350 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, BOX 15063

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94115

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7619 (WR-RP)

June 14, 1983

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Ely, Nevada
 From: Associate Regional Director, Resource Management and Planning
 Subject: Schell Resource Area, Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement, White Pine and Lincoln Counties, Nevada

In response to your request, we have reviewed the subject document. The statement adequately addresses the concerns of this agency and we have no comments to offer.

John H. Hays

cc: WAO 762

COMMENT LETTER 8

Division of State Lands
 State Land Office
 State Land Use Planning Agency
 1000 East Main



Address Request to:
 Division of State Lands
 301 N. 1st Street
 Carson City, Nevada 89401

STATE OF NEVADA

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of State Lands

July 8, 1983

Merrill DeSpain
 District Manager
 Bureau of Land Management
 Star Route 5, Box 1
 Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

We have reviewed the Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement with the state divisions of Parks, Forestry, and Historic Preservation and Archeology and have the following combined comments and recommendations from all four agencies.

We found the statement to be generally clear and well written, and compliment your staff. We have enclosed a list of some of the department's concerns with respect to wilderness designations, for your information.

Applying these concerns to the wilderness study areas being studied here, we have the following recommendations:

1. The Weepah Spring WSA appears suitable for wilderness designation roughly as recommended in the preferred alternative. However, we recommend that the area of heavy mineral claims in the northwestern corner be cut back to approximately the limited alternative, in order to avoid what appears to be a substantial resource conflict.
2. The Parsnip Peak WSA appears suitable for designation roughly as recommended in the limited wilderness alternative. However, we recommend that the triangular area extending to the south be included as shown in the preferred alternative, in order to extend the wilderness area down to the vicinity of the state park located to the south.
3. The Far South Egan WSA appears suitable for designation as recommended in the preferred alternative.
5. The Fortification Range WSA should be dropped from further wilderness consideration, as recommended in the preferred alternative.
5. The Worthington Mountains WSA appears suitable for wilderness designation as recommended in the preferred alternative.

COMMENT LETTER 8

Merrill DeSpain
July 8, 1983
Page 2

- 5 | 6. The Mt. Grafton WSA should be dropped from further consideration as recommended in the preferred alternative.
- 7 | 7. The Table Mountain WSA should be dropped from further consideration as recommended in the preferred alternative.
- 3 | 8. The White Rock WSA should be dropped from further consideration as wilderness as in the limited wilderness alternative due to its lack of really positive and unique wilderness values.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

PBWB

Pamela B. Wilcox
Administrator

PBW/js

cc: Division of State Parks
Division of Historic Preservation
and Archeology
Division of Forestry
John Walker
Office of Community Services

Enclosure: Wilderness Statement
Draft #4

COMMENT LETTER 8

DRAFT #4

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN EVALUATING AND PROPOSING WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

Listed below are a number of factors that should be considered when wilderness areas are being studied in the draft environmental impact statements, when being reviewed by state agencies, interest groups, and private citizens, and when being considered for recommendation as a wilderness area. As more information becomes available, better evaluations of wilderness proposals and more soundly based recommendations will occur. The list below represents many concerns and factors; however, it should not be thought of as exhaustive.

1. Area of wilderness study area;
2. Area, percentage and configuration of private land inclusions;
3. Livestock permittees, livestock improvements and other agricultural impacts;
4. Mineralization of the area, including types of minerals known, location, and potential for additional mineralization within the wilderness study area and adjacent areas;
5. Oil and gas potential and amount and location of leasing activity;
6. Geothermal potential and amount and location of leasing activity;
7. Unique geologic features;
8. Number and location of existing roads and ways;
9. Predominant vegetation associations;
10. Known unique botanical species;
11. Recreational demand and existing recreational activities;
12. Cultural features;
13. Use of area by native Americans;
14. Location and type of important wildlife habitats;
15. Proximity to other wilderness areas designated or under study;
16. Enforcement required to protect special natural areas, cultural sites, and insure integrity of a wilderness experience;
17. Proximity and frequency of military actions such as low-level flight operations, and sonic booms;
18. Water, water rights and watershed values;
19. Woodlands and other vegetative resources;

COMMENT LETTER 8

20. Visual and scenic resources;
21. Impacts on local communities;
22. Opportunity for solitude throughout the wilderness study areas; and
23. Demand, both existing and future, for wilderness.

COMMENT LETTER 8



Nevada
Department
Of
Wildlife

WILLIAM A. HOLSH
DIRECTOR

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

1100 VALLEY ROAD

P.O. BOX 10876

RENO, NEVADA 89520-0022

TELEPHONE (702) 784-6214

June 27, 1983

Ms. Linda Ryan, Director
Offices of Community Services
1100 E. William, Suite 109
Carson City, NV 89710

Dear Linda:

We appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments on the draft Schell Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement which was prepared by the Ely District of the Bureau of Land Management (SAI NV #8320088). Our agency is particularly interested in the federal wilderness program because of the management ramifications associated with fish and wildlife populations. For clarity purposes, we have listed our comments for each of the eight Wilderness Study Areas addressed in the EIS.

MOUNT CRAFTON

- 4 We agree with the preferred alternative which recommends the area
5 as unsuitable for further wilderness consideration. The Mount Crafton
5 area has numerous roads which have been used by hunters and fishermen
for many years and we believe these access points should remain open to
the public in the future.

FAR SOUTH EGANS

- 5 We support the preferred alternative which considers some 40,615
5 acres as suitable for wilderness. Wildlife conflicts in this area are
not severe and we believe that a wilderness designation may enhance
populations by providing future protective measures.

FORTIFICATION RANGE

- 5 We agree with the preferred alternative which recommends this unit
5 be deleted from further wilderness consideration. The area does not
appear to provide high wilderness values nor would stringent protective
measures enhance existing wildlife populations.

COMMENT LETTER 8

Ms. Linda Ryan
June 27, 1983
Page 2

TABLE MOUNTAIN

We again support the preferred alternative which recommends that this unit be deleted from further wilderness consideration. The Table Mountain area provides current access routes which we believe are important to maintaining recreational use of the area.

WHITE ROCK RANGE

We do not support the preferred alternative for this unit and would recommend the White Rock Range be deleted from further wilderness consideration. The area provides summer and wintering habitat for mule deer and we believe that management options for range improvement should remain open. Current access roads also provide for increased recreational use during hunting seasons, a factor which would be altered should the area be designated as wilderness.

PARSNIP PEAK

We do not support the preferred alternative for this unit for the same reasons described above in the White Rock Range. The major climax plant community in this area under fire protection appears to be monotypic stands of piñon-juniper, an ecological situation which does not favor mule deer and many other animal species. We believe that future range rehabilitation through various means will be important for maintaining species diversity and abundance in this area in the future, a condition which is not consistent with wilderness guidelines.

WORTHINGTON MOUNTAINS

We support the preferred alternative which recommends 17,500 acres be considered for wilderness. Such designation should provide no conflicts with wildlife and would offer future protection in an area that currently receives little public use.

WEEPAN SPRINGS

We also support the preferred alternative which recommends 53,317 acres be considered for wilderness in this unit. Wilderness designation should provide for no major wildlife conflicts in this low public use area.

COMMENT LETTER 8

Ms. Linda Ryan
June 27, 1983
Page 3

I hope these comments will be of use to the Bureau of Land Management in making a final assessment as to the value of the lands with respect to wilderness classification. If you have any questions on the above, please feel free to advise.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM A. MOLINI, DIRECTOR

Patrick D. Coffin
Patrick D. Coffin
Acting Director

RPM:pw

cc: Regions II and III
Tina Nappe

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 8

Response Number 1

A zone of speculative mineral potential approximately 17,000 acres in size has been identified on the north end of the Weepah Spring WSA. Its identification is based on geologic environment, the inferred geologic processes, and reported mineral occurrences indicating moderate favorability for accumulation of mineral resources. A portion of the heavily claimed area in the northwestern corner of the WSA, where interest seems to be most intense has been excluded from the suitable portion in the Proposed Action. A large part of the remaining area is recommended suitable for designation. This is in recognition of the WSA's high wilderness values and due to the speculative nature of the mineral potential. This recommendation is subject to change based on the findings of the USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral survey that is mandated by law for all areas recommended suitable for designation.

Response Number 2

Your support for the Limited Alternative, slightly modified from the draft document has been noted. We have also noted your support for the Preferred Alternative from the draft document for the Far South Egans, Fortification Range, Worthington Mountains, Mount Grafton, and the Table Mountain WSA's.

Response Number 3

The White Rock Range WSA has been found to possess mandatory wilderness characteristics. The absence of any significant resource conflicts is the main reason that this area is recommended preliminarily suitable.

Response Number 4

Most of the access routes used by recreationists have been cherrystemmed. This means they form the WSA's boundary and may continue to be used even should the area be designated as wilderness.

Response Number 5

Your support for the Preferred Alternative from the draft document has been noted.

Response Number 6

While it is true that large monotypic stands of piñon and juniper can be detrimental to mule deer and other species, it is not true that management options for improving this habitat would be closed. Although some means of 'range rehabilitation' are inconsistent with wilderness guidelines, others are not, and the general goal of reestablishment of natural conditions will be a priority in designated wilderness areas. Some vegetation conversion performed in the suitable area by modified fire suppression, prescribed burns, and more intense conversion performed outside the WSA, should not make wildlife management objectives and wilderness designation mutually exclusive.

Response Number 7

The White Rock Range, recommended suitable for designation has only four documented roads or ways which penetrate it for a maximum distance of one mile. These are cherrystemmed out of the area and will remain open to vehicular use.

COMMENT LETTER 9



Lincoln County Conservation District
P.O. Box 459 Caliente, Nevada 89008 Phone (702) 726-2101

Board of Supervisors
Chairman, Keith Whipple
Vice Chairman, Robert Matthews
Sec. - Treas. Ralph Smith
Representative, Zone 1, Kenneth Lee
Representative, Zone 2, William Schuchfield
Member, Howard McCracky
Member, Jay Wright

The following comments are developed and supported by the Lincoln County Conservation District in respect to the Wilderness E.I.S. of the Schell Resource Area, Nevada.

Introduction:

1. Recognized, the need for wilderness, where there is solitude, but most of all where man can visit, enjoy the surroundings and enjoy the natural environment. Recognizing also that man must not "live by bread alone," we need such areas to preserve some of our interesting sites, and additionally that which can be returned to and/or kept in their original vegetation.
2. Most of the entire state of Nevada now has ample sites for solitude, relaxation and all the open space needed, and there is no indication that this will change for many, perhaps hundreds of years to come.
3. The designation of wilderness alone, will increase travel and use of areas so designated. We discourage designation for this reason, and others as noted.
4. We propose as most important, above all, that opportunity for the CONSERVATION and WISE USE of all land be the foremost and first criteria of the decision making process.
 - a. High priority must be given where the land can fairly economically be restored to its potential of agricultural production (range improvements). Such treatment provides beauty and accomplishment. It restores the land back to more nearly its original status, and provides a potential for that which is most essential to life—that of food and watershed protection.
 - b. Many of the delineated wilderness areas are in such a condition that even wildlife has left them virtually alone, and they need to be restored to their potential for this use also. Wilderness designation is to consign it to its decadent condition from now on. We do not believe that this is a viable alternative

COMMENT LETTER 9



Lincoln County Conservation District
P.O. Box 459 - Columbia, Nevada 89008 Phone (702) 726-3101

Board of Supervisors
Chairman, Kevin Whipple
Vice Chairman, Hubert Mathews
Dir. Fin. & Public Safety
Equipment Mgr., Zane L. Kenneth Lee
Equipment Mgr., Zane L. Kenneth Lee
Member, Howard McCroskey
Member, Jay Wright

9 Wild horses do need to be managed. Wilderness designation will limit their management and contribute to the further decadence of the range resource. Only by tremendous expense will they be managed.

The forest resource cannot receive much adverse impact because of its inaccessibility. Woodlands of Pinon - Juniper needs desperately to be managed in areas where there is a potential for higher and better use, such as vegetation for wildlife and livestock.

Wilderness designation perhaps will work well in areas where vegetation manipulation and minerals are not a factor. There need not be as large a number of them as are being proposed.

10 Large numbers of wilderness designations can only result in a loss. Loss of use, loss of taxpayer funds to administer, and a loss of economic potential to an area already stifled by Federal jurisdiction.

We, therefore, respectfully submit this thoughtful and reasonable proposal for wilderness designation

Sincerely,

Kenneth D. Lee

Kenneth D. Lee
Range Committee Chairman

KDL:omh
cc

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT SELF GOVERNMENT

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 9

Response Number 1

The Wilderness Policy states that "The construction of new rangeland improvements is permissible if determined to be necessary for the purpose of resource protection (rangeland and/or wilderness) and the effective management of these resources . . ."

Response Number 2

Although some means of 'range rehabilitation' are inconsistent with wilderness guidelines, others are not, and the general goal of reestablishment of natural conditions will be a priority in designated wilderness areas.

Response Number 3

Minerals was an issue which was analyzed in this document. Since wilderness designation does not prohibit mining of valid claims, it does not discard that option forever.

Response Number 4

Access to private land within a BLM wilderness area is guaranteed. Some stipulations may be attached to access development for protection of the wilderness resource, but the access provided will be reasonable for the purposes of the landowner. Wilderness designation will in no way limit the use of such property.

Response Number 5

Your support for the Preferred Alternative from the draft document has been noted.

Response Number 6

The White Rock Range, recommended suitable for designation has only four documented roads or ways which penetrate it for a maximum distance of one mile. These are cherry-picked out of the area and will remain open to vehicular use.

Response Number 7

Historic grazing practices and past fire suppression have contributed to the thick piñon and juniper cover with the White Rock Range and Parnip Peak USA's. This thick tree cover has adversely affected both livestock and wildlife. It is not true that management options for improving this habitat would be closed. Although some means of 'range rehabilitation' are inconsistent with wilderness guidelines, others are not, and the general goal of reestablishment of natural conditions will be a priority in designated wilderness areas. Some vegetation conversion performed in the preliminary suitable area by modified fire suppression, prescribed burns, and more intense conversion performed outside the USA, wildlife management objectives and wilderness designation should not be mutually exclusive.

COMMENT LETTER 9



Lincoln County Conservation District
P.O. Box 459 Caliente, Nevada 89008 Phone (702) 726-3101

Board of Supervisors
Chairman, Keith Whipple
Vice Chairman, Robert Mathews
Sec. Treas., Ralph Smith
Equipment Mgr., Zone 1, Kenneth Lee
Equipment Mgr., Zone 2, William Schulz
Member, Howard McCroskey
Member, Jay Wright

5. Other economic considerations need to be given attention.
3. a. Mining may be a viable use and should not be discarded and made forever to be cut off if minerals and/or oil should be available which may be important to the nations economy.
4. b. Access to private lands needs to be established and/or protected. Citizens hold these lands, have paid taxes on them for many years with the plans of a future use, not now expedient. They may not now have an existing right of way to them. Such wilderness designation may limit the use and access of such private property for which much time and expense has already been expended and take away rights based on present use.
6. We see a need for certain small areas to be returned to their natural condition as near as possible for study and give support for future improvements. These areas need not necessarily be identified within wilderness areas, but may be made in conjunction with them if provisions are made initially with this objective outlined.

With the foregoing reasons as outlined below, we respectfully submit the following proposals of the eight wilderness areas listed in the Schell Resource Area.

5. 1. Mt. Grafton: We concur with the Preferred Alternative for the reasons listed in the E.I.S.
2. Far South Egans: This area has some possibility for limited wilderness activity on the steep mountainous areas where mineral enrichment is not evident, and where the vegetation is closer to its original condition.
5. 3. Fortification Range: We agree with the Preferred Alternative, although there are some unique land formations which have aesthetic appeal, but these areas are probably too small for wilderness designation.

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT SELF GOVERNMENT

COMMENT LETTER 9



Lincoln County Conservation District
P.O. Box 459 Caliente, Nevada 89008 Phone (702) 726-3101

Board of Supervisors
Chairman, Keith Whipple
Vice Chairman, Robert Mathews
Sec. Treas., Ralph Smith
Equipment Mgr., Zone 1, Kenneth Lee
Equipment Mgr., Zone 2, William Schulz
Member, Howard McCroskey
Member, Jay Wright

5. 4. Table Mountain: We agree with the preferred Alternative here also.
6. 5. White Rock: This area has several old roads in it and has high potential for vegetation improvement in most of the area as explained in the Introduction items 4, 4a, and 4b. In addition to the benchlands that have proposed vegetative treatment, much of the east slope of the mountain can be improved as was the Mt. Wilson burn. The trees are now too thick to be used by wildlife or livestock to much extent. The Mt. Wilson burn area has proved without any doubt the tremendous improvement to wildlife, livestock and beauty. We recommend it unsuitable for Wilderness.
7. 6. Parnip Peak: We have serious reservations concerning this area. Our reasoning is outlined in 4, 4a, 4b, and 5b of the Introduction. Most of this area has increased with woodland to the extent that even deer and other wildlife leave virtually alone. The Wilson burn proves the tremendous improvement possibility of this similar adjoining area also. To cut off this improvement potential is a decadent philosophy of proportions. Our recommendation is that it is unsuitable for wilderness designation.
5. 7. Worthington: We would recommend the Preferred Alternative due to the unique topography, land forms and Indian Culture, as long as the rights of existing mineral location is not curtailed. Our rationalization is similar to that in the E.I.S.
8. 8. Weepah Spring: Most of the Weepah Spring area is noted for its mineralization and we recommend a "no wilderness" designation. The area already has very limited access and undoubtedly will always be a "wilderness" for the sake of those who want to experience its potential for that in the big southern portion of the area.

Other Considerations:

We sharply disagree with the impact statement that adverse impact on wildlife will occur with designation. We say this because of, for the most part, the decadent vegetation now existent in the major part of the areas. Given designation, these areas remain a high potential for tremendous wildlife habitat improvement.

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT SELF GOVERNMENT

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 9

Response Number 8

A zone of speculative mineral potential approximately 17,000 acres in size has been identified on the north end of the Meehan Spring WSA. A portion of the WSA on the northwest where interest seems to be most intense has been excluded from the suitable portion in the Preferred Alternative. A large part of the remaining area is recommended suitable for designation. This is in recognition of the WSA's high wilderness values and because there is no compelling mineral information to otherwise influence the decision. This recommendation is subject to change based on the findings of the USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral survey that is mandated by law for all areas recommended suitable for designation.

Response Number 9

The Wilderness Management Policy states that "viable, healthy populations of wild horses and burros will be maintained in wilderness areas at levels determined appropriate by the BLM planning system." Management actions may include use of motorized and mechanical equipment including aircraft when no other reasonable alternatives exist.

Response Number 10

There would be no loss of taxpayer funds because of wilderness designation. The land being proposed for wilderness is already in Federal ownership. Wilderness designation would not change this and the in lieu of Tax Payment to the State would not be affected. Many uses of the land would also be able to continue under wilderness designation such as grazing, hunting, mineral development on valid claims, etc.

COMMENT LETTER 10



American Wilderness Alliance

4860 East Evans Avenue/Suite 8/Denver, Colorado 80222/(303) 750-5018

April 22, 1983

Mr. George Cropper, Manager
Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. Cropper:

Please make this letter a part of the official hearing record on the Bureau of Land Management's tentative wilderness recommendations and draft EIS for the Schell Resource Area.

The American Wilderness Alliance is a Western-based national non-profit organization, dedicated to conserving and promoting wise use of decreasing public wildlands, wildlife habitat and free-flowing river resources.

Many of our members, residents as well as non-residents, in Nevada have used and enjoyed the Wilderness Study Areas in the Schell Resource Area and are familiar with their wilderness characteristics.

We were, therefore, shocked to learn that you have proposed that only 17,500 acres of the Worthington Range WSA be designated as wilderness, and that no part of the Fortification Range and Mount Grafton should be so designated.

We hold that the three aforementioned WSAs are among the finest examples of wilderness in the entire Great Basin.

The Worthington Range WSA possesses outstanding limestone ridges and spires and one of the great cave systems of the United States. The BLM's inadequate 17,500 acre wilderness proposal fails to protect the important undeveloped alluvial approaches as a setting to the wilderness high country. By its minimal nature, it exposes the wilderness solitude of the area and destroys most of its potential for a wilderness experience. We urge that your draft recommendation be revised to encompass some 17,000 acres as wilderness in the Worthington Range.

The Fortification Range is a beautiful wild area, faintly resembling the Black Hills, with its towering white limestone and quartzite domes which rise nearly 8,000 feet. Sawtooth ridges protect hidden gorges. Opportunities for

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Photographer, Author

James A. Rasmussen
Wildlife and Game Commission
Dr. Wallace Stegner
Author

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Clifton B. Merritt

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Wild America
William A. Schneider
Editor
384 Fulle
Helena, Montana 59601

Working Together To
Conserve Wild America

COMMENT LETTER 10

Mr. George Cropper, April 22, 1983, Page 2

- 2] solitude and a quality wilderness experience are numerous. Some 41,600 acres should be designated as wilderness..

3] With such a large, undeveloped area as the Mount Grafton WSA, it is unthinkable that the Bureau of Land Management could not find it worthy of wilderness status. This area contains a spectacular 10,000 foot densely forested ridge, one of the highest in Nevada on BLM lands. The WSA contains unusual Jeffrey pines along the streams and groves of ancient brittlecone pines on the high west-facing slopes. The area possesses long-living pine regeneration not noted elsewhere in the Great Basin. Clear trout streams even contain some native cutthroat trout. The presence of Sonoran vegetation at the 7,000 foot level further adds to the tremendous natural diversity of the superb unit. Opportunities to provide wilderness recreation and protect wild-life habitat are outstanding.

We strongly request that you rewrite your draft recommendation with a final proposal for a Mount Grafton Wilderness of approximately 73,000 acres.

In addition, we respectfully protest the BLM's draft recommendations on the three aforementioned WSAs as an unwarranted sellout of some of the finest potential wilderness you have to offer in Nevada or anywhere. It would seem that you should be proud to propose all three areas with maximum acreages for wilderness status. So recommended and designated, these outstanding units will be cherished as natural shrines by future Nevadans and other Americans.

Sincerely,

Clifton R. Merritt

Clifton R. Merritt
Executive Director

CRM:dm

COMMENT LETTER 10



American Wilderness Alliance

4950 East Evans Avenue/Suite 8/Denver, Colorado 80922/(303) 758-5018

May 6, 1983

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ELK PAPER

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Associate, Wildlife Game Conservancy
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Aurora

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Clifton R. Merritt

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Wild America
William A. Schroeder
Editor
354 Fuller
HOLDS, NORMAN 55001

Mr. George Cropper, Manager
Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. Cropper:

Reference is made to my April 22 letter for the hearing record on the BLM's tentative wilderness recommendations and draft EIS concerning the Schell Resource Area.

In that letter, I erroneously indicated that Clear Creek contained native cutthroat trout. The letter should have said that the Mount Grafton WSA contains a valuable trout stream which should be protected.

In addition, the Mount Grafton WSA does provide irreplaceable habitat for an important elk population which migrated to the area from the national forest. The elk, as clearly established long ago by such eminent wildlife authorities as Drs. Aldo Leopold and Olaus Murie, is ecologically a wilderness animal that does not prosper in the wild state without buffering from man and his works.

A wilderness designation for the Mount Grafton WSA is essential in the long run to the perpetuation and well being of this herd of elk. The elk is not common on BLM lands in Nevada. Where found, it is especially important to preserve its wild habitat free from man-made disturbance, so that the elk can be maintained. Over the long term, a wilderness classification can best accomplish this objective.

Please include this correspondence in the aforementioned record as a correction and an amendment to my April 22 letter.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Clifton R. Merritt

Clifton R. Merritt
Executive Director

Working Together To
Conserve Wild America

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 10

Response Number 1

There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of undeveloped alluvial approaches would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your support for wilderness designation for the Fortification Range has been noted.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 4

The presence of elk and associated habitat is one of the documented wilderness values leading to a partial wilderness recommendation, accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 11

Atlantic Richfield Company 155 Seventeenth Street
Denver, Colorado 80217
Telephone 303 575 7577
J. R. Mitchell
Public Lands Coordinator



July 8, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
Ely District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5
Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Re: Schell Wilderness Draft EIS

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Atlantic Richfield Company appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Wilderness Suitability EIS for the Schell Resource Area in the Ely District, Nevada.

We support BLM's nonwilderness recommendations for Table Mountain, Mount Grafton, and Fortification Range. As was outlined in our previous comments of September 27, 1982, Table Mountain and Weepah Spring have high potential for disseminated gold deposits; therefore, we are concerned with the recommendation for wilderness of over 93,000 acres in Weepah Spring. The BLM has acknowledged that energy and mineral opportunities will be foregone. We are concerned as to how this decision was made. Is wilderness really the highest and best use of this land?

BLM has identified what the energy and mineral conflicts are in these areas. However, there is no indication as to how or whether BLM actually weighed the mineral resource values against the wilderness values in order to determine which use was more important. The Wilderness Study Policy requires that wilderness values must outweigh other resource values. We would like to see BLM's rationale for their wilderness decisions regarding the comparison between mineral and wilderness values outlined in the Final EIS. If this is done, interested parties would be able to better understand BLM's decision-making process for an issue which will have far reaching impacts upon the energy and mineral industry.

COMMENT LETTER 11

Mr. DeSpain
July 8, 1983
Page 2

We hope that BLM will consider our comments and make the appropriate changes in the Final EIS. Please contact us should you wish to discuss our comments further.

Sincerely,

Jay R. Mitchell
J. R. Mitchell

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 11

Response Number 1

Our proposed action to recommend 50,499 acres as suitable for wilderness was based on available information and public input, using the criteria outlined in the Wilderness Study Policy. Refer to Appendix A. In the case of Meepah Spring WSA, the Wilderness values are well known and documented to be high. Conversely, most of the mineral values are speculative. A portion of the heavily claimed area in the northwest corner of the WSA, where interest seems to be most intense was eliminated from the Preferred Alternative in the draft document. This suitable decision is subject to change based on the findings of the USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral survey that is mandated by law for all areas recommended suitable for designation.

Response Number 2

As with all resource decisions, there is a fair amount of subjectivity. Managers make their decisions based on the information provided to them, such as the type of information in Chapter 3. Using their professional judgment and the criteria contained in the Wilderness Study Policy, they arrived at their decision.

Response Number 3

The rationale for the decisions does not belong in an environmental statement which is a factual and analytical tool used by the managers. The rationale for the final decision will be written into the Record of Decision, which in the case of wilderness is the Wilderness Study Report that will be signed by the Secretary of the Interior. This document will not be completed until all of the mineral surveys, required by law, are completed by the USGS/BM and the decisions reevaluated based on their findings.

COMMENT LETTER 12



5831 Rosebud Lane, Unit M-1
Sacramento, CA 95841
(916) 338-4562

July 5, 1983

BLM, Ely District Office
Mr. Merrill L. DeSpain, District Manager
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain,

The draft Schell Wilderness E.I.S. summary has been reviewed as requested. It appears that an unusually high amount of resource lands are being proposed for wilderness study, inspite of the fact there is considerable strong local opposition to any wilderness classification. It also appears that any adverse impacts resulting from a non-wilderness classification would be negligible in comparison to other resource values in the area involved.

1 One fact seems to bother me is the impacts summary indicates wildlife habitat and conversions would be foregone in the "No Action" category. This seems quite unreasonable in the light that most wildlife habitat management projects are accomplished in non-wilderness areas. Therefore, we don't see how wilderness would have much bearing on habitat conversion, in some cases to a much lesser degree?

2 In view of the above, we believe that limited wilderness would be our preferred choice to protect only those areas that are truly qualified for wilderness designation. In this case, we feel uses of other natural resources should have equal or higher priority. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Ed Dunkley,
Administrator

ED:mb

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 12

Response Number 1

The analysis of habitat conversion has been rewritten in the Final EIS.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the Limited Wilderness Alternative from the draft document has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 13



COMMITTEE FOR IDAHO'S
HIGH DESERT
P.O. BOX 463 BOISE, IDAHO 83701

May 9, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain,
District Manager
Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

The Committee for Idaho's High Desert is a grassroots, non-profit organization with members throughout Idaho and the other High Desert states, including Nevada. Our members use the desert country of the Nevada Great Basin for hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, photography, and a variety of other uses. Many of these uses are possible or optimal only in a wilderness setting. For this reason, we would like to make the following comments on your recent wilderness study.

We are very concerned over the recent Draft Wilderness EIS released by the Ely District. The DEIS recommendations are entirely inadequate for protecting the outstanding wilderness, wildlife, geological and other resources of the WSAs being considered. Specifically, we are concerned about the following areas:

1. **Worthington Range:** We support the conservation coalition's proposal for a 47,633-acre wilderness to protect this outstanding area. The ridges, spires, cliffs and alluvial fans comprise an entire ecosystem, and the entire area should be protected. We urge you to recommend Wilderness designation for the lower 30,133 acres in the final EIS.
2. **Fortification Range:** This area is a spectacular structural dome which contains prime wildlife habitat, forested canyons and unique geological formations. Because the DEIS admits that range conversion, oil exploration, growing mining access and development of communications facilities will eventually destroy all wilderness values if no Wilderness protection is given the area, we endorse a 41,615 acre Wilderness for the Fortification Range.
3. **Mount Grafton:** This mountain contains unusual ecological features, prime wildlife habitat, and supports a regenerating stand of *Pinus ponderosa* - a highly significant and very valuable biological value. We request that you reverse your non-wilderness recommendation, and support a 73,216 acre Wilderness.

We believe the Preferred Wilderness Alternative is completely inadequate, because it fails to protect the outstanding natural and recreational values of these WSAs. We also believe the DEIS

COMMENT LETTER 13

Mr. Merrill DeSpain May 9, 1983 page 2

recommendations are not consistent with the mandate Congress gave BLM to study and recommend areas such as these for wilderness. We believe that the recent BLM decision which reinstated over 800,000 acres in Utah indicates the growing concern that wilderness studies and decisions be based on sound data and provide adequate recognition of the outstanding values of our remaining desert wilderness lands. For these reasons, we support the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We would like to have these comments included in the official decision record, and would like to receive a copy of the FEIS when it is completed.

Sincerely,
COMMITTEE FOR IDAHO'S
HIGH DESERT

by Bruce R. Boccard
Bruce R. Boccard,
Chairman

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 13

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the lower alluvial fans and approaches would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 73,216 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The high quality wilderness values of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this was accepted as the proposed action.

COMMENT LETTER 14



CONSERVATION CALL
3942 Hughes Court
San Diego, Ca. 92115

30 April 1983

Telephone: (714) 583-8486

Merrill DeSpain
Ely District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Box 1, Route 5
Ely Nevada, 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

We understand that your office has released a draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Wilderness Study Areas in the Ely District. We would like a copy of the EIS for study, but not knowing the cut-off date, we offer comments on the information that we do have.

1 We understand that the draft recommends only 17,500 acres of wilderness for the Worthington Range. We urge the adoption of the 47,633 acre proposal.

2 Also, We urge a 41,615 acre wilderness in the Fortifications-we know that such a sized wilderness had been recommended by conservationists even before the passage of the National Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964. This range must surely be an outstanding wildlife habitat in addition to its geological attractions.

3 We understand that no wilderness has been recommended for Mount Grafton. This peak and surrounding area feature several surprising botanical complexes of great value. Mitchell Beauchamp, botanical specialist, and past president of the California Native Plant Society, has said there are several stands of bristlecone pines on the mountain's slopes, as deserving of protection as those we treasure here in California. We urge a 73,216 acre Mount Grafton WSA.

We request that these areas be re-considered for enlargement to the sizes mentioned, in the final EIS. We endorse the other WSAs in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative.

Roscoe A. Poland
Roscoe A. Poland
Director

AS WE SAVE THE NATURAL WORLD, WE ALSO SAVE OURSELVES

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 14

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. Chapter 3 mentions the wildlife habitat and the scenic values. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values, including bristlecone pine, of the Mount Grafton USA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this was accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 15

Defenders OF WILDLIFE

June 4, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Ely District
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Box 1, Route 3
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Defenders of Wildlife has learned of your Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on Wilderness Study Areas in the Ely District. This letter is intended to express our comments and recommendations on this DEIS.

In general, we are disappointed with the "Preferred Wilderness Alternative," and the inadequate wilderness acreage recommended therein. We strongly support the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative," and urge you to adopt its recommendations in your Final EIS.

We are especially concerned about the fate of three outstanding areas. First, we disagree with BLM's recommendation for only 17,500 acres for the Worthington Range, and instead favor the 47,633 acres requested by Nevada conservationists. As you know, the Worthington Range contains a limestone ridge with magnificent cliffs and spires, and the unique Leviathan Cave. The additional wilderness acreage is needed to protect adjacent alluvial habitats, and other terrain consistent with providing comprehensive management and solitude.

Second, we are distressed with BLM's "no wilderness" recommendation for the Fortification Range. This area possesses significant wildlife habitat and other natural values which need and deserve wilderness classification.

Third, we are similarly disappointed by BLM's "no wilderness" recommendation for Mount Grafton. As one of Nevada's highest peaks, Mount Grafton is densely forested, contains important wildlife values, and is particularly notable for stands of Jeffrey Pine, bristlecone and white pines.

COMMENT LETTER 15

2.

We recommend 41,615 acres of wilderness for the Fortification Range and 73,216 acres of wilderness for Mount Grafton.

Please carefully consider our wilderness recommendations, and we wish to receive a copy of your Final EIS on these Wilderness Study Areas.

Thank you very much for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Richard Spotts

Richard Spotts
California Field Representative
Defenders of Wildlife

5604 Rosedale Way
Sacramento, California 95822
(916) 442-6386

RS/js

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 15

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the adjacent alluvial habitats would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. Chapter 3 documents the wildlife habitat and other natural values. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 73,216 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, including wildlife values and notable stands of conifers, of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this was accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 16



EASTERN NEVADA TRAPPERS & FURTAKERS, ASSOC.

P.O. BOX 1304 — McGILL, NV 89318

July 8, 1983

Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

These comments are in response to the Schell Resource Area Wilderness Suitability Study and Environmental Impact Statement. These comments represent the Eastern Nevada Trappers and Furtakers Association's feelings. Our association is based in White Pine County, Nevada and made up of informed, concerned, active conservationists, many of whom have lived here all or most of their lives, and know the proposed wilderness areas well.

It should be known many of our members and the user groups we represent have made the most use in these proposed areas historically. Traditionally trappers have always tried to protect and preserve the wilderness characteristics of our Nevada ranges along with other long time area sportsmen. Were it not for their concern, many of those areas considered suitable today, may not have been so.

Our association has determined the preferred alternative as the best alternative, and support this route as we understand it to date. We particularly agree with the ELM that the Grafton and Fortification ranges should have no wilderness designation. Since our interest group has always been of the majority of those making use of those areas selected for wilderness, we are likely to be the most affected by access closures. We compliment the Ely District on its fairness and foresight to allow existing ways and trails, roads, etc., to be left open for continued access.

The lack of consideration for historic access in other wilderness areas of the country has been one of the major problems for the largest and oldest group of true conservationists, the "Sportsmen" (i.e. trapper, hunter). However, we support prevention of future access ways into the five (5) proposed alternative locations.

COMMENT LETTER 16

Page 2

Again this support for the proposed alternative is based on the assurances that hunting and trapping use has always been compatible within wilderness areas, and this activity will always continue to be allowed in them. We suggest that due to the large size of these sites, that it is quite likely several ways and trails may have been missed by the ELM's initial inventories and not designated. For this reason we'd like to see some kind of clause that would recognize such access routes that may be found or noted in the future, and then be allowed access status. This request seems reasonable, as if such occur, it will have been due to ELM error.

The other area of concern deals with your wording, dealing with bobcats under other game species on page 34, i.e. "Nationally there is a concern that bobcat populations are low." This statement is irrelevant to the document and doesn't belong here. As is, the following sentence indicates what your saying is that the population is at a low stable status. This would indicate some significant threat to the species future neither of which is certainly not the case.

As anyone informed on the subject knows, Nevada bobcats are the best managed and monitored species in the state. Also NDOI has always been able to attest to the good condition and status of this species, and their management program of it, is looked at as a model by professionals in other states. This comment should be stricken out as it is based on emotionalism and not sound biological information or fact.

We hope you will consider our input, and keep our association apprised on the progress of your actions on these subjects.

Sincerely,

Craig Marich

Craig Marich, Secretary
Eastern Nevada Trappers and Furtakers Assoc.
P.O. Box 1304
McGill, NV 89318

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 16

Response Number 1

A great deal of effort was expended during the wilderness inventory to identify all roads and ways in the wilderness inventory units. Field reconnaissance included fixed wing and helicopter time and extensive ground work. Several formal comment periods were held to acquire from the public specific information about mammoth prints in the area. Identified roads and noticeable ways will not be closed. There now exists no mechanism at the District or State level to adjust WSA or suitable area boundaries.

Response Number 2

This wording has been changed in the Final EIS.

COMMENT LETTER 17



ECOLOGY CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Project of Educational Communications, Inc.
P.O. Box 35473, Los Angeles, CA 90035

Telephone (213) 559-9160

May 17, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Route #8, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain,

Members of the Ecology Center of Southern California are concerned about the need to protect all possible wilderness throughout the United States before these beautiful natural areas are lost to the destructive uses of mankind. Consequently, we support most of the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Ely District with some strengthening additions.

1 While we are pleased that the Worthington Range with its limestone ridge and Leviathan Cave has been recommended for wilderness, the BLM recommendation of 17,500 acres is far short of the 47,633 acres which would truly protect this unspoiled alluvial fan and other spectacular features.

2 How can you justify a no wilderness recommendation for the Fortification range when the area is highlighted by canyons with unique geological formations and is prime wildlife habitat? Certainly the 8,000' structural dome and colorful white and orange serrated ridges and huge quartzite domes deserve wilderness status. We suggest 41,615 acres.

3 Mount Grafton could easily have 73,216 acres qualify for wilderness designation especially with one of the highest peaks on BLM Nevada lands (at 10,800'). The ancient bristlecones and white pines meeting with Sonoran succulents make marvelous ecosystems for preservation.

In your Final Environmental Impact Statement please do not accept your "Preferred Wilderness Alternative" since the public prefers much more wilderness than you have recommended. We support your WSAs in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative and look forward to hearing that you have adopted our recommendations.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy Sue Pearlman
Nancy Sue Pearlman
Director

NSP:ez

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 17

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fan would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. Chapter 3 documents the scenic geologic formations and the wildlife habitat. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values, such as the high peaks and bristlecone pine, of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this was accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 18



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

June 2, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
Ely District Manager
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Star Route #5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Re: Schell Resource Area Wilderness DEIS proceeding

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

The Humane Society of Southern Nevada was originally incorporated in 1944 for the prevention of cruelty to animals. From its inception the Society has carried forward the concept of wildlife habitat protection.... and consider the elimination of wildlands a prime form of cruelty to animals.

An estimated 40% of all living species are now threatened at least in part due to the rape and destruction of pristine roadless areas. We recognize in the Schell BLM Resource Area DEIS proceeding serious shortcomings in the FLPMA mandate, in which the Congress through Section 603 sought to bring protection to such wildlands. The BLM in general, and within its "preferred alternatives" seems bent on emasculating what Congress intended. This has since been borne out in critical court rulings in Colorado and California--where the BLM was ordered to refrain from elimination of EIS's where there was only nominal mineral conflict and where public input was disregarded. More recently, the 9th Circuit ruled that the Utah BLM was massively omitting true wilderness on false mineral assumptions. We strenuously object, for instance, to WSA decisions being based on GEM mineral studies, where no actual proof of marketable minerals is shown.

Therefore, we deem the "preferred alternative" in the draft EIS to be out of step in terms of the long-range public interest. Closer to mark, without a doubt, is the "wilderness emphasis alternative"....but, even this must undergo required changes.

continued

COMMENT LETTER 18

page two

Schell Resource Area Wilderness DEIS proceeding:

Specifically, we are appalled to note the omission of such critical wildlands and habitat areas as the Mount Grafton WSA and the Fortification Range WSA.

2 The FORTIFICATION RANGE is known to us as an outstanding dome-shaped massif that bears a remarkable resemblance to the famed Black Hills of South Dakota. It is a sublime area of towering shafts of sunlit rocks, spires and honey-combed ridges. We are informed by reliable specialist amongst our membership, that maintenance of wilderness in this area is vital for the hard-pressed mountain lion and has been recognized for some time as a critical raptor area for eagles. We further cannot comprehend the local BLM decisionmaker's failure to see how beautiful this range is....and why it cannot be recognized for the marvelous region for solitude that it truly is. We urge 41,615 acres.

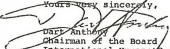
3 MOUNT GRAFTON is believed to possess the highest elevation on BLM lands in Nevada. It has long been recognized as a critical habitat in this state for elk, which is a species well known for its profound dependence on wilderness conditions. The area is an outstanding fresh water fishery. In addition, the occurrence of ancient bristlecone pines are believed to be in a unique biological relationship with Sonoran flora. We recognize in the Mt. Grafton area a truly remarkable opportunity to preserve a vital Rocky Mountain environment that is still relatively untouched (60,000 acres).

4 In the WORTHINGTON RANGE, we urge the expansion of the wilderness acreage to 47,633 acres. Here, priceless geological features face a grave threat. This is a high, narrow ridge, whose wilderness solitude experience requires a designation that includes the alluvial fan approaches to both the west and east.

On the other units of the "wilderness emphasis alternative" we commend the BLM for its recommendations in the Far South, Egans, White Rock Range, Parsnip Peak and Weepah Spring.

Finally, we request that this statement be incorporated into all future proceedings, including the final EIS as supporting the "wilderness emphasis alternative" with the previously cited changes.

Yours very sincerely,


Gary Anthony
Chairman of the Board
International Humane Society
Humane Society of Southern Nevada

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 18

Response Number 1

Some wilderness recommendations were based partially on the GEM studies, as well as BLM inventories. For the purposes of analysis in this document, however, reasonable assumptions were made by our geologists of what specific areas will likely be affected by future mining. The final decisions may be adjusted when the more extensive USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral surveys, which are required by law, are completed and analyzed. Even when these surveys are complete they will in most cases provide only better knowledge of likelihoods of occurrence.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. Chapter 3 documents the scenic geologic formations and the wildlife habitat. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values, such as elk, bristlecone pine, fisheries, and high peaks of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 4

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fan approaches would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

COMMENT LETTER 19



MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

Minerals Advocate
in Public Policy

12640 West Cedar Drive
P.O. Box 13608
Denver, Colorado 80213
303-999-5567

Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Sir:

These comments constitute the response of the Minerals Exploration Coalition (MEC) to the Schell Resource Area Wilderness Suitability/Environmental Impact Statement. The MEC is a coalition of exploration companies and individuals conducting exploration on federal lands.

In view of the fact that wilderness areas designated after December 31, 1983, will be withdrawn from appropriation under the mining and leasing laws, we believe that all areas with mineral and energy potential should be excluded from wilderness designation, even though no economic deposit is now known. The withdrawal limitations will preclude the collection of new data, and new areas of mineral potential will not be found. With new discoveries effectively stopped, the policy of excluding all currently known mineral potential from wilderness should be followed, so that exploration of these areas will not be restricted and minerals might yet be produced. Explorationists tend to look at the long term because the lead time of discovery may be ten to fifteen years. The impact of wilderness on minerals should be assessed over the long term (a century or more). We believe that land use decisions should be in conformity with the policy statements made in the National Minerals Program Plan and Report to Congress released by the President in April, 1982.

Mineral values in this part of Nevada are significant and in the past have contributed significantly to the economy of the region. We expect this will be true in

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Tucson, Arizona
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Washington, D.C.

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Denver, Colorado
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Denver, Colorado
Major W. Serry
Lakeview, Colorado
Elvino Gonzalez-Urnan
Lakeview, Colorado
W. Glen Zion*
Englewood, Colorado

*Executive Committee member

COMMENT LETTER 19

Page 2
BLM/Schell Resource Area
7/7/83

the future. New discoveries of oil and gas in the Overthrust Belt of the Western U.S. and new exploration concepts make this part of Nevada a frontier oil and gas exploration country. This potential for mineral and oil and gas production should not be unduly limited by wilderness land classification.

MEC prefers the Limited Wilderness Alternative because, in comparison with the Preferred Alternative and other Alternatives, it allows better access to lands with significant mineral values. This is particularly true in the Worthington Mountains WSA and the Weepah Spring WSA.

Data compiled in the Geology Energy Mineral (GEM) Resource for the BLM by contract, indicates moderate mineral potential for metallic minerals in the northern part of the Worthington Mountains WSA. This area should not be included in wilderness; therefore, MEC prefers the Limited Wilderness Alternative.

In the Weepah Spring WSA, fewer areas shown in the GEM report to have moderate mineral potential are included within the Limited Wilderness Alternative boundary. However, MEC believes that the Limited Wilderness Alternative boundaries should be drawn back even more along the northwest and northeast sides so that access to the areas of mineral potential and mining claims can be assured.

The Minerals Exploration Coalition thanks you for the opportunity to comment on this Wilderness Suitability Study and Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

John D. Wells
John D. Wells, Jr.
President

JDM/th

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 19

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Limited Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

Response Number 2

The Weepah Spring WSA had six alternatives analyzed in the Final EIS. This number of alternatives was deemed adequate for analysis purposes.

COMMENT LETTER 20



National Audubon Society

Western Regional Office
255 AUDUBON PLACE, SACRAMENTO, CA 95821 (916) 481-2322

31 May 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Ely District
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

On behalf of the National Audubon Society's western region, which includes the State of Nevada, we appreciate this opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact statement recently released by your office concerning wilderness designations.

In general terms we must object to the choice of the "preferred wilderness alternative" for the final EIS. We submit that the considerable resource values of your district would be better served by the Wilderness Emphasis alternative considered in the draft EIS.

We are also concerned about the disposition proposed in the draft EIS for three particularly valuable areas within your district:

- 1 | Mount Grafton - We object to the "no wilderness designation for this peak, one of the highest on BLM lands in Nevada. Its unique forest associations, bristlecone pine populations, and perennial trout stream recommend it for wilderness protection.
- 2 | Fortification Range - We urge that the 41,000 acre area of the Fortification Range be given wilderness protection in recognition of its considerable wildlife and aesthetic values.

AMERICANS COMMITTED TO CONSERVATION

COMMENT LETTER 20

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
Page 2
31 May 1983

3

Worthington Range - We recommend that Wilderness' acreage for the Worthington Range be increased to the 47,600 acre proposal put forth by the National Public Lands Task Force. Cutting the acreage for the Worthington Range could well leave much of the best areas unprotected.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,


RICHARD MARTYN
Vice President

DE/sl

cc: Rupert Cutler, NAS
Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
Lahontan Audubon Society
Red Rock Audubon Society

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 20

Response Number 1

The high quality wilderness values, of high peaks, bristlecone pines, and fisheries of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The scenic and wildlife values have been documented in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 47,600 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the remaining acres would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 3,000 acres to preserve this setting.

COMMENT LETTER 21

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS TASK FORCE NEVADA OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

Respected Sirs:
MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MORRILL DESPAIN

Charles H. Morrell, Jr.
Laramie, Wyo. Nevada
John McFarlane
Baker, Nevada

Edward L. Gorman
Laramie, Nevada
John McFarlane
Laramie, Nevada

John McFarlane
Laramie, Nevada
John McFarlane
Laramie, Nevada

John McFarlane
Laramie, Nevada
John McFarlane
Laramie, Nevada

Harold A. Kentland
Jamestown, North Dakota

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Jamestown, North Dakota

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Jamestown, North Dakota

Harold A. Kentland
Jamestown, North Dakota

2 May, 1983
Rt. 7
Jamestown, ND 58401

Mr. Morrill Despain
District Manager
Ely District,
U.S.B.L.M.,
State Rt. #5
Box #1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. Despain,

One of the premises of ecosystem health is the maintenance of genetic diversity. The original distribution of plant and animal species must be maintained in order that the various ecotypes will continue to exist. Science and industry have spent millions trying to find ecotypes of plants for their agronomic and pharmaceutical values. Thus the Mt. Grafton area, with its most unusual and diverse assemblage of some rare western conifer communities, certainly deserves consideration as wilderness. I would like to see at least 75-100,000 acres designated as wilderness in this area.

Similarly, one of the highlights of the wilderness experience for humans is the diversity of natural areas. Here contrasts and lack of monotony are of utmost importance. Thus the edge of the glacier as it crumbles into the sea draws more visitors than the glacier itself, and the pleasing inter-digitation of tundra, lake, and subalpine wood has a much greater appeal than each system viewed separately. For this reason I feel at least 40-50,000 acres be designated wilderness in the Worthington and Fortification ranges in your District.

Wilderness currently makes up a scanty .03 of our land area, one of the lowest proportions among the developed nations of the world. Certainly we cannot afford to continue to set an example as being the nation most mowed with biological and geological diversity, yet the most short-sighted in their preservation and protection. I therefore object to your Bureau's "Preferred Wilderness Alternative" as outlined in your latest Environmental Impact Statement and urge adoption of the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative".

Sincerely,

Harold A. Kentland

Harold A. Kentland
Honorary Life Member, NORA

cc/Congressman Byron Dorgan (ND)

NORA President

Thomas L. Foster
Nevada, Nevada
Lorraine Bell
Nevada, Nevada

George Land
Nevada, Nevada
Sharon Kaye
Nevada, Nevada

Edward Johnson
Nevada, Nevada
Lorraine Bell
Nevada, Nevada

IN RE: MEMBERSHIP

James L. Foster, Jr.
P.O. Box 1000
Nevada, Nevada

Paul M. Foster
Nevada, Nevada
Lorraine Bell
Nevada, Nevada

Lorraine Bell
Nevada, Nevada
Lorraine Bell
Nevada, Nevada

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 21

Response Number 1

Your support for the Mount Grafton area has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, including the conifer communities, of the Mount Grafton MSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

Your support for wilderness for the Worthington Mountains and Fortification Range has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 22

Schell Resource Area DEIS on wilderness. Page three

Through the efforts of NORA volunteer Alvin McLane of Reno, much information on the Worthington Range (WSA #7 in draft EIS) has been submitted to both the Nevada State Office and the Ely BLM District since 1963. It is widely known that Mr. McLane's explorations and the resultant NORA input, was the first data to be submitted on this WSA. In fact, much of this data constitutes a bonafide set of discoveries.

The feature that first drew our attention was a mammoth cave, which we first called "Levlathan". That name, to the best of our knowledge, was first used by NORA--or, at least, in the pioneer times in which "NORA" was known as the Nevada Public Domain Survey (NPDS). NORA was a full participant in three explorations co-conducted by the National Speleological Society. These explorations of the cave and its surroundings subsequently revealed a magnificent limestone-spired mountain range. Even without the cave, this range's stunning limestone towers, gendarmes and rugged cliffs would rate serious wilderness consideration. Still later explorations revealed the existence of scattered growths of ancient bristlecone pines in the range. These were borne out by actual samples we submitted to the Department of Agriculture in 1966.

The Worthingtons are very precipitous and it is a mountain range that is "stacked on end". Thus, essential to the wilderness experience and solitude are the astonishing views to the unspoiled alluvial fans below. We strongly believe protecting only the high ridge itself would defeat the purpose of wilderness. It is essential that the final wilderness boundary be lowered to the 6,000-ft. level on both the east and west approaches to the range. The so-called "road" cited on wilderness map (W-040-242) is a "way". In fact, in a personal visit to the mountain range in 1978 it could not be seen on the alluvial fan at all. In fact, all known efforts to enter the Worthington Range (known to us) require abandonment of vehicles well down onto the lower slopes of the alluvial fan approaches--especially on the west side. We have sent numerous volunteers into the range's area, and the ruggedness is still continuously reported.

The cave itself, one of the largest in America, begs an enlarged area. Levlathan Cave is still a virgin limestone cave in every respect. But, it will not remain so, if the size of the wilderness is restricted. The cave is loaded with unique speleothems and formations. These must be protected--with a wilderness plan that looks far into the future. Thus, we urge adoption of 47,633 acres in the final EIS recommendation.

The WSA unit called Hogmah Spring (Unit #8 in the DEIS), has long been known to us, and designated in 1964 as the Sagehen Range Wilderness in the NORA Index & Survey. Volunteers have reported that it is one of the most rugged of the WSA units. It contains a major forest of virgin ponderosa pines--which inhabit hollows and swales that are highlighted by precipitous ridges. We enthusiastically endorse the recommendation of the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. More information will be known to us and will be added to the NORA Index & Survey--from a planned trip into the range of June 5-7th.

NORA commends the Ely BLM District for its recommendations in the White Rock Range (WSA unit #5 in DEIS), Far South Egan's (WSA unit #2) and the Farall Peak area (WSA unit #6).

Finally we would appreciate the Ely BLM District's reconsideration of the Golden Gate Range, a towering cliff-like range east of the Worthington Range (near Garden Valley). It contains rare flora and is a prime

COMMENT LETTER 22

Schell Resource Area DEIS on wilderness. Page four

raptor area. On a 1978 visit to Coal Valley, we were astonished by the "El Capitan" style wall facing the east. The data in the NORA Index & Survey strongly suggests that the Golden Gate Range far exceeds the 5,000-acre plus de facto roadless requirements of FLPMA. We feel it has been tragically overlooked and deserves very serious reconsideration.

We urge that this statement be entered into the record of the final EIS for these proceedings.

Yours, very sincerely,

Charles S. Watson, Jr.
Charles S. Watson, Jr.
Director

attachments (1)
CSW/csw

COMMENT LETTER 22



Nevada

Tuesday
MAY 17, 1983
GAZETTE-JOURNAL

BLM wilderness alternative applauded

By DOUG MCILLIAN

Here wilderness enthusiasts Monday found themselves applauding the Bureau of Land Management's "preferred alternative" taking parts of five mountain ranges south of Uly as possible wilderness areas.

But they said the BLM goofed when it left out Mount Grafton, the highest peak in the 40 million acres the BLM administers in Nevada, and the Fortification Range as areas of towering spires due east of Grafton.

Nine of the 10 witnesses at the BLM hearing on wilderness within the Schell Resource Area, which takes in eastern White Pine and Lincoln counties and a corner of Nye, endorsed more wilderness than the 185,000 acres the BLM would prefer.

Quoting a hiking guide to the Great Basin, Virginia Hill, conservation chairman of the Sierra Club's Tuynah Chaparral described standing on 11,500-foot Mount Grafton as an "edge of the world feeling." He criticized the BLM for seeing "appreciable" mineral potential as its justification for throwing a surrounding 41,000 acres out of National Wilderness Preservation System.

"They've gone over that area with a fine-tooth comb for at least 80 years and still there is no mineral development," scoffed Charvin Watson, head of the pro-wilderness Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association.

See WILDERNESS, page 4C

Wilderness

From page 1C

But Bob Warren, executive secretary of the Nevada Mining Association, said the BLM report might have underestimated the mineral potential of the eight Schell areas it still is studying for wilderness potential, as well as the economic impacts of removing them from major development. The region has one of the highest potentials in the state for oil and gas development, said Warren, the only one to speak against wilderness at the hearing in the Pioneer Hotel.

The hearings move to Ely tonight and Pioche Wednesday night.

The BLM inventoried about 125 reach-line areas before selecting the eight study areas, comprising about 10 percent of the agency's acreage in the Schell Resource Area. It is proposing to eliminate half of that from further wilderness consideration.

Watson decried the loss of the Fortification Range, which he compared to a "miniature Black Hills of South Dakota," with mountain lion and golden eagle habitat.

He also said the BLM 17,500 acres of the Worthington Mountains of Nye County to protect Leviathan Cave,

whose huge limestone recesses have not yet been fully explored.

But conservationists and BLM officials agreed on the White Rock Range. The study team, headed by Wayne Howell of the BLM's Ely office, kept all 21,400 acres of the plateau-covered range inside the Nevada-Utah border under wilderness consideration.

And nobody objected to the bureau's decision to eliminate the entire 36,000-acre Table Mountain Area east of U.S. Highway 93 from the list either.

Wilderness advocates generally endorsed the other areas, although many said the BLM should have considered more acreage: most of Parnass Peak and Weepah Spring, two areas of 32,000 acres each in northern Lincoln County, and 48,015 acres of the Far South Spine Range, east of the White River Valley.

The BLM study is not even a recommendation at this point. The final environmental impact report is due out in September, Howell said, but it will be at least several more years of study before they could be recommended to the president and Congress.

Only wilderness study areas in the Tonopah area are as far along in the process, said BLM wilderness chief Dave Hansen.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 22

Response Number 1

The Final EIS has been restructured so the reader can more easily follow the site specific impacts.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The scenic geologic features and wildlife habitat have been noted in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The wilderness qualities you mention for Mount Grafton such as the bristlecone pine, fisheries, elk, etc., have been noted in Chapter 3. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the Final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 4

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fans would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains NSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 5

Your preference for the 58,662 acres Wilderness Emphasis Alternative from the draft EIS has been noted, as well as your support for the Preferred Alternative for the White Rock Range, Far South Spine, and Parnass Peak.

Response Number 6

The BLM's inventory revealed that the Golden Gate Range lacked mandatory wilderness characteristics. This decision was finalized in 1980 by the State Director.



NATURAL AREA COUNCIL

950 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022
212 546-9282

RICHARD H. POUGH, President

May 5, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management, Ely District
Star Route #5, Box #1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Nevada's unique wilderness areas need and deserve BLM's continued protection in order for their wilderness values to survive. While I endorse most of the WSAs in the recent Ely BLM District draft "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative," I urge you to consider making the following changes in the final report.

- 1 In view of the increased oil and gas interest in the area, 41,615 acres should be maintained as wilderness in the Fortification Range. This is not only a unique geological area but a prime wildlife habitat area.
- 2 The Mount Grafton area deserves a 73,216 acre WSA. Its distinct Rocky Mountain character supports outstanding year-round flowing trout streams and dense forests of Jeffery pine, ancient bristlecone pine, white pine, etc.
- 3 To experience the full grandeur and solitude of the spires and cliffs of the Worthington Range, it is essential to preserve the alluvial fan approaches. Therefore, I would urge that 47,633 acres be set aside to adequately protect the integrity of this area.

Yours sincerely,

Richard H. Pough

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The area's geologic and wildlife values have been noted in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 73,216 acre, All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, such as trout streams and forests, of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fan approaches would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

COMMENT LETTER 24

Public Lands Institute

1725 I STREET, N.W.
SUITE 600
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

202 225-8210
May 5, 1983

New York Office
112 EAST 120 STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10038
212 512-6199

* Bureau Office
1720 BALK STREET
DENVER, CO 80218
303 577-9748

25 KENNEDY STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109
415 421-5561

Mr. Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Having been apprised of the contents and thrust of your draft environmental impact statement on Wilderness Study Areas, I write to advise you of the deep concern of the Public Lands Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The proposed reductions in WSA acreages are so drastic as to be ominously reminiscent of the unjustified and irregular elimination of lands of wilderness character in Utah that resulted in the recent ISLA reversal of BLM's decisions in 21 areas.

Respectfully but urgently we request reconsideration of the following recommendations: (1) Reduction of the Northington Range WSA by two-thirds to a mere 17,500 acres, a cut that would leave out alluvial fan areas that are essential to both the scenic and ecological integrity of the WSA, and also an exceptional and enjoyable experience of solitude.

(2) Drastic reduction or elimination on some pretext of the 41,000-acre Fortification Range WSA, this being one of the more spectacular unspoiled areas on BLM lands in Nevada as well as containing important wildlife habitat;

(3) The incredible recommendation of "no wilderness" for the Mt. Grafton WSA which, with elevations up to 10,800 feet, encompasses richly forested slopes -- not too many of these on BLM lands in Nevada; scientifically important stands of bristlecone pine and Jeffrey pine; good trout streams, and exceptional natural features. A Wilderness Area of some 70,000 acres would be in order, and we urge it be recommended for consideration by Congress.

4 Please have your wilderness study team take another good and careful look, Mr. DeSpain, at the Golden Gate Range and Table Mountain

Public Lands Institute is a Division of Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 24

-2-

4 WSA to make certain that options are not hastily closed for Congress and the public.

Please make this letter a part of the EIS record in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Callison
Charles H. Callison
Director

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 24

Response Number 1

There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fans would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 3,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,000 A11 Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The wildlife and scenic values are noted in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values, such as high peaks, forests, and trout streams of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 4

The BLM's wilderness inventory revealed that the Golden Gate Range lacked mandatory wilderness characteristics. This area was dropped from wilderness consideration in 1980 by the State Director.

The Table Mountain WSA is a designated WSA but was recommended unsuitable in the Proposed Action. Your support for this area has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 25

Sierra Pacific Power Company

July 8, 1983

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Merrill DeSpain
Manager, Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Star House 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Re: Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement - Scheil Resource Area

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement.

Sierra Pacific Power Company would like to commend the Bureau of Land Management for producing an easily read and complete Draft Wilderness EIS. We support your "Preferred Alternative" in the Draft Wilderness EIS with the exception of the wilderness boundaries of the Weepah Spring (WV-040-246) unit. We believe the use of Highway 38 as a wilderness boundary is not in keeping with multiple use concepts.

- 1 We recommend the wilderness boundary be a minimum of a half-mile from Highway 38. This would allow flexibility for transportation and utility right-of-way users in the future.

- 2 Also, on Page 35 of the DEIS, under the section entitled "Lands", we found the 1960 reference date of the corridor study to be in error. The "Western Regional Corridor Study" conducted by the Western Utility Group (WUG) was published in May 1980.

We trust that our comments on the Draft Wilderness EIS will be helpful in the development of the Final Wilderness EIS.

Sincerely,



Michael P. Sullivan
Supervisor, Environmental Affairs
and Right-of-Way Acquisition

MPS/SPY/ks

cc: Stephen Younk
Bob Roster - BLM
Stu Gearhart - BLM

P. O. BOX 10100/ RENO, NEVADA 89520/ TELEPHONE 702/789-4011



RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 25

Response Number 1

In the Proposed Action, the boundary of the suitable portion of the Veepah Spring NSA on the southeast is the base of the cliffs rather than U.S. Highway 318. The cliffs would serve as an excellent boundary because of the ease with which they can be identified, and because the cliffs are virtually self-protecting and would require very little monitoring or patrol.

Response Number 2

This comment is appreciated, and the date has been corrected as indicated.

COMMENT LETTER 26

WATERS and WILDLANDS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

Box 14
Cortaro, Arizona 85230
(602) 744-1001
May 27, 1983

Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Ely District Bureau of Land Management
Star Route # 8, Box # 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

We endorse the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative" proposal and appeal for you to put Worthington Range (47,633 acres), Fortification Range (41,615 acres), and Mount Grafton (73,216 acres) into wilderness recommendation in your final Environmental Impact Statement.

As users of the public lands, the Institute has a direct desire to see that unique wilderness areas are set aside so they can be enjoyed and used as educational laboratories. What we have observed over the years is a constant lessening of opportunities for unique educational experiences in wilderness settings. Therefore, we urge you to adopt a more liberal wilderness recommendation in the sense of providing more, not less, wilderness lands to be set aside for protection.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on your document.

Sincerely,



Theron Lane
Executive Director

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative from the draft document for the Worthington Range, Fortification Range, and Mount Grafton have been noted.

White Pine Power Project

A Nevada-California energy generation development in White Pine County

Development Manager:
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Room 931, Post Office Box 111, Los Angeles, California 90051

June 9, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Ely District Office
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada, 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement

The White Pine Power Project (WPPP) supports the Preferred Alternative for the Schell Resource Area Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) developed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Preferred Alternative minimizes possible conflicts between the WPPP alternate southern access railroad corridors in Steptoe Valley and Lake Valley and the Schell Resource Area WSAs. The Preferred Alternative also provides adequate corridor width adjacent to the Mount Grafton WSA to permit construction of the Spring Valley Site preferred transmission corridor or the North Steptoe Valley Site alternative transmission corridor.

Please contact Mr. Ronald P. Merlo at (213) 481-5372 if you should require further information on WPPP activities proposed in the Schell Resources Area.

Very truly yours,

Eldon A. Cotton
ELDON A. COTTON
Project Manager

CC: Mr Ronald P. Merlo

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 27

Response Number 1

Your preference for the draft EIS's Preferred Alternative has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 28



North Dakota Chapter

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

RR # 1, Valley City, ND 58072



May 4, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Ely District, U.S.B.L.N.
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

The North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society is an organization of natural resource professionals. We are very concerned about our country's ability to effectively preserve and protect valuable natural resource areas. We would like to offer these comments on the draft environmental impact statement for wilderness protection in the Great Basin.

- 1 In order for wilderness protection to accomplish the necessary objectives, it is essential that areas encompassing biological or geographical significance be protected. This is not possible in regards to the Worthington Range where the proposal has eliminated areas critical for full protection of this area. We would recommend that the approximate 30,000 acre removal from wilderness declaration be reinstated to provide adequate protection of this area.
- 2 We would also issue support for the protection of the Fortification Range within the wilderness classification. The diversity of both biological and geographical areas within this region lend itself to wilderness protection.
- 3 Our organization requests that elimination of the Mount Grafton area from wilderness declaration be reconsidered. The variety of complex and threatened ecosystems as found in this area require wilderness declaration to maintain the integrity of these resources. We urge that approximately 75,000 acres be included in wilderness for this area.

Our review of the "Preferred Wilderness Alternative" indicates that this proposal does not offer adequate protection for these important resource areas. We suggest reconsideration of this proposal before the final impact statement is released. We concurrently present our support for the protection offered under the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative." Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Lloyd A. Jones
Lloyd A. Jones
President

Dedicated to the wise use of all natural resources

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 28

Response Number 1

There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of additional acreage would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your support for the Fortification Range has been noted. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

Your support for the Mount Grafton area has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, such as the diverse ecosystems of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 29

MRS. HOWARD ALLEN
3750 EL CANTO DRIVE
SPRING VALLEY, CA 92077
571-4183

Re: Ely District (BLM)
Wilderness DEIS

Dear Mr. DoSpain -

Having followed BLM in the CDCA (Camp Desert Conservation Area) under FLRAA for many years I was not surprised to see BLM's recommendations on Ely District Wilderness in the DEIS.

The deletion of Mt. Grafton is astonishing! Even an ACEC designation would not protect protection adequate to the situation.

Non-suitable for Fortification Range is a cop-out! And so is the deletion of 30,000 acres in the Worthington Range.

No doubt you have orders from "in high." But BLM has orders from Congress, too.

The precedent which the DEIS sets for the Ely District will be applied elsewhere, not only Nevada but other States.

We are trying to keep BLM honest in CDCA. Now Nevada is doing as well now around Congress!

cc: Senators, Hunter, Butts

Harriet Allen

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 29

Response Number 1

Your support for wilderness for the Mount Grafton, Fortification Range, and the Worthington Mountains WSA's has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 30

3370 Frontier Street
Las Vegas, Nevada 89102
July 5, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain,

I would appreciate the following comments on the Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Study/EIS being made a part of the official record of comments.

I have traveled in the back country within the borders of the Schell Resource Area relatively extensively. I have viewed all but the White Rock Range from outside the WSA boundaries and so I feel rather well acquainted with the settings of the various areas. I have explored the wilderness potential of the Parsnip Pk. Weapah Spg. and Mt. Grafton areas in some detail and to a lesser extent the Far South Egans.

I feel that wilderness recommendations of the final Study/EIS should include portions of 7 WSAs, with boundaries of some areas generally following the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative and for other areas the Preferred Alternative, as follows:

1. Mt. Grafton: Wilderness Emphasis boundaries, but if felt absolutely necessary from management considerations, eliminate private inclusions of the west-central lobe by readjusting boundaries along the base of steeper terrain slopes near these properties (Robbers Roost & Upper Wildcat Canyon). Also, why not include the steeper east slopes between Mill Creek and Dupont Creek, as this should still exclude the Oil & Gas potential of the lower slopes and bench. These observations are based in part on a splendid backpack to and south of Mt. Grafton along the ridge crest from out of North Creek in 1982. I agree with the DEIS assessment of wilderness and supplemental values here and I believe wilderness designation for this highest of ELM ranges to be a better use than alternative exploitation.
2. Far South Egans: Preferred Alt. boundaries believed adequate. This is an imposing area as viewed from NV Hwy 318 and from the Shingle Pass Road. Its rugged grandeur is obvious. It is an imposing sight from the Mt. Grafton ridgetop. The wilderness assets described in the DEIS are high and conflicts appear to be low.
3. Fortification Range: Wilderness Emphasis boundaries believed best. This judgement is based on the special qualities of scenery and the subjective viewpoint of friends who have visited the area. It certainly qualifies for special management consideration. I have been impressed by its distant appearance from US 93.

COMMENT LETTER 30

Letter, Howard Booth, July 5, page 2

4. Parnsip Peak: Preferred Alt. boundaries would be best. I climbed Parnsip Pk from the east in 1982, exploring the splendid ponderosa/oak/aspen pockets in the slickrock areas of apparent tuff on the east base of the main ridge. I have also explored Wilson Creek and the communications site on Wilson Peak during a backpack about 1979. I think the Wilson Burn is not an unnatural appearing feature. The preferred boundaries eliminate most of a long benchland tongue to the SE that is a controversial vegetative treatment area that would contribute little to wilderness for this WSA.
5. Worthington Mountains: Wilderness Emphasis boundaries preferred here. The Oil & Gas leases and mineral and geothermal potential areas on the west are mostly eliminated. The road on the east is a good recognizable boundary that would then include lower bench ecosystems and improves the size and configuration of the proposal. The eastern geothermal area has too low an apparent potential to justify exclusion of bench lands for that reason. I haven't closely visited the area but its setting as viewed from the Seaman Range and from NV Hwy 375 or the Cherry Gr Summit (Adaven) road certainly seems remote and imposing. The crucially important caves certainly would be well protected under wilderness boundaries.
6. Weepah Spring: Preferred Alt. boundaries are O.K. here. I made a close circumnavigation of this WSA with several other persons about 1979. We were all much impressed by its wilderness values even though an unseasonal snow storm prevented our backpacking far into the Timber Mtn. ponderosa area. I feel that wilderness values for this area far outweigh mineral potential values, especially with respect to the almost certainly destructive disseminated gold operations which are uncertain at best.
7. White Rock Range: Preferred Alt. boundaries. I have not seen this area but from the DEIS descriptions it meets the prerequisite wilderness criteria with resource conflicts that are unusually low.

I hope these recommendations are close to what materializes in the final report. I feel we need areas like these in the National Wilderness Preservation System in order to assure a continued resource of wilderness for the future. Non-designation in each case will lead to eventual destruction of this non-renewable resource value while designation still leaves future resource exploitation as an option for later generations. While some increase in use-impact will occur because designation flags these areas, the long range alternative of exploitative destruction would be far worse. Furthermore, the public lands belong to all Americans and the relatively small influx of outside visitors to these areas should be tolerable. The economic impact is incidentally favorable, of course.

Sincerely,

Howard G. Booth
Howard G. Booth

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 30

Response Number 1

Your suggestions were utilized in the formulation of a new partial wilderness alternative. This alternative was evaluated in the Final EIS and accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

Your support for the Preferred Alternative in the draft EIS for the Far South Egans, Parnsip Peak, Weepah Spring, and White Rock Range has been noted.

Response Number 3

Your support for the Fortification Range has been noted. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 4

The Wilderness Emphasis Alternative from the draft EIS has been accepted as the Proposed Action in the Final EIS.

COMMENT LETTER 31

May 25, 1983

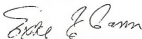
Mr. Merrill DeSpain
District Manager of Bureau of Land Management
Star Rout 5 Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

As a native Nevada I support the Wilderness Emphasis
Alternative and wish to add Mt. Grafton to the area plan.

I most sincerely urge and support the area.

Sincerely,



(Mrs.) Edie E. Cann
629 Jones St.
Reno, NV 89503

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 31

Response Number 1

Your support for the draft EIS's Wilderness Emphasis Alternative has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 32

Manuel DeSpain-Dist Manager
BAM
Ely, Nev.

7-7-83

Re: School WSA-DEIS

Dear Sir:

I am an Oregon attorney, ornithologist, botanist, fisherman, bird photographer, and conservationist with a serious interest in the management of our public lands.

Thank you for a chance to review your WSA documents.

I feel they are better prepared than others I have reviewed from Nevada districts.

I support the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative.

I believe it is a better balanced direction than the Proposed Alt. I feel that Grafton Mtn.

area should be included in the acreage at 43,600.

Also the Weepah Spring acreage should be increased to 58,000, as this is a very important wildlife habitat area, with potential prairie sites.

This alternative would help spread wilderness areas across Nevada, protect watershed, critical wildlife habitat for game & nongame species and protect riparian and archaeological areas from ORV abuses.

Please include these rather short comments in your record, and send me the final EIS with, hopefully, your positive changes!

Thank You,

Jeffrey Cook
27641 SE Haley
Boring OR 97009

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 32

Response Number 1

Your support for the draft EIS's Wilderness Emphasis Alternative has been noted, especially for Mount Grafton and the Weepah Spring WSA's.

COMMENT LETTER 33

17 May 1983

Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Rly, District, Bureau of Land Management
Rte #5, Box 1, Rly, Nv. 89501

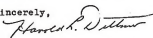
Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Although not as familiar with the area of Nevada as those of my native state of California, I am still concerned with what the Nevada Bureau of Land Management will do with the wilderness, especially in your district. Having traveled in this area a number of times it appeals to me as being the home of some of our country's true "wilderness areas". Please try to keep as much of it as possible that way.

We often take so much of this unique land for granted that small intrusions, small deviations, may or may not destroy the total aspect of "wilderness". But in these days it seems to be the attitude of "who cares"? Well I do now, even though I am 70 years old and still expect to travel and see more of the great west and the wilderness areas that still remain and can be kept. But of course my main concern is that once you give up a few thousand acres here and a few thousand acres there, what will be left for future generations? I should hate to think that it will be oil derricks, mining excavations, sub-divisions, and all the ills of our modern civilization.

There is no point to belabor any particular area over another, as I am not that familiar with each individual area that is under consideration. But I do hope and pray that you will give every consideration to keeping the areas LARGE in the final Environmental Impact statements. Once you give them away to something else besides a wilderness they will be gone forever. AMEN!

Sincerely,



Harold B. Dittmer
3911 Fernwood Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90027

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 33

Response Number 1

Your support for wilderness has been noted.

July 6, 1983

Dear Folks:

As promised, here are my additional comments on your Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness EIS.

Generally speaking, a reasonable overview of wilderness values, an assessment of actual resource conflicts and a long range view of open space planning would dictate that you protect as much wildland as possible within the Schell Resource Area. As the "All Wilderness Alternative" discussion states: "There will be no significant alteration of the local economy as a result of wilderness designation. There will be no significant impacts to any sector of the local economy." (pg. 87)

On page 88 you discuss potential opposition to the "All Wilderness Alt.". This discussion is totally out of place.

Your task is to assess resource values within the scope of possible wilderness designation. Either an area qualifies or not. Your job is not to anticipate public perceptions. That job belongs to Congress.

Your discussion on page 88 on mineral enclosures is speculation at its worst. Your concluding sentence is outstanding ~ "information ... does not exist." Why did you even print it?

In the "Conclusion" section you display the ever-present paranoia about wilderness manageability. If you were to become more flexible and creative you could shake this

(2)

ogre of "manageability".

Wilderness designation does not prevent the use of prescribed burning to restore or improve wildlife habitat. Fire suppression has caused many problems with habitat deterioration. Prescribed burns simply makes up for past mistakes. (Read "Wilderness Management" by Hunte, Lucas authors)

I seriously doubt that you have enough of a timber base on your district to even begin to discuss "sustained yield". The term "manageable woodland" is certainly misleading. Your "timber" program should essentially be custodial in nature.

Your discussion on "range improvements" is misleading because of its vagueness. The real issue is that there will be no reduction in AUMs and that the impacts to range resource will "not be significant".

As regard to the "Wilderness Emphasis Alt." and your negative discussion of prescribed burns/habitat conversion you finally reveal the "bottom line." "However, impacts will not be significant because funds for conversion on the scale needed for hard re-establishment are not available." Why even open up this can of worms?

I certainly appreciate this opportunity to comment on this important document.

Sincerely

Barb Koehler

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 34

Response Number 1

Quality Standard No. 5 in the Wilderness Study Policy calls for "special attention to adverse or favorable social and economic effects" on local areas. The EIS team has taken this to mean, in the case of social effects, both physical and attitudinal effects. The inclusion of public attitude assessment provides the decision-makers with a complete analysis of all likely impacts of the various alternatives. Equipped with this analysis, the decision-makers should be able to make enlightened decisions, well aware of all potential impacts, including the reaction of affected publics. The ultimate decision-making body is, of course, Congress, for whom this document is prepared.

Response Number 2

This statement has been stricken.

Response Number 3

In many cases, it is expected that fire will be used to restore wildlife habitat. In some important cases, however, fire suppression has resulted in tree cover with no understory to carry fire. In these cases, prescribed burns are very difficult to do safely because of the need for such an intensive fire to carry through the thick tree cover.

Response Number 4

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandates that lands within the jurisdiction of the BLM be managed under the principles "of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law." This mandate applies to management of the forest resource, even if it consists only of fuelwood harvest, posts, Christmas trees, piñon nuts, etc.

Response Number 5

The issue of deer population decline in Herd Management Area No. 23 is of extreme interest to many persons - in particular the Nevada Department of Wildlife and local sportsmen. The BLM would be remiss if it failed to discuss the effects that wilderness designation would have on the herd.

COMMENT LETTER 35

William R. Meiners

(Continued)

May 12, 1983

Merrill DeSpain
District Manager, Ely District
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route #5, Box #1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Although not a Nevada resident, I am acquainted with the Ely District having done research work in the area in the early 1960s. Accordingly, I was impressed with the quality and extent of lands, wild lands that have escaped the heavy hand of man. These lands deserve protection and classification as wilderness to assure their continued viability, diversity, and "wild" character.

To this end BLM has undertaken their wilderness classification responsibilities as mandated by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. I'm told the Ely District's effort leaves much to be done, that your "Preferred Wilderness Alternative" leaves much to be desired. Thus, I must ask your reconsideration in the final EIS of the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative." I particularly ask that the 47,633 Worthington Range, 41,615 acre Fortification Range, and 73,216 acre Mount Grafton Wilderness Study Areas be given full protection and classification. To do less is to short-change future generations their rightful heritage. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William R. Meiners
William R. Meiners

WRM:mjm

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 35

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS has been noted, especially for the Fortification Range, Worthington Mountains, and Mount Grafton WSA's.

COMMENT LETTER 36

April 28-82

Dear Sirs.

My comments on Wilderness
Already

1 | Most areas left alone will in
time, unless, there needs to be some
Management, where the P.S. get to
which, there needs to be a fire.

I think where the wilderness can
be improved to produce more wildlife
life and food that it should do so.

The most of Nevada is already a
wilderness, and if a person can't
find solitude in Nevada, they
can take a trip to outer space,
maybe they can find more solitude
out there.

Sincerely

Orren Fash

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 36

Response Number 1

Wilderness management will allow for the operation of natural systems, including fire. Where man's activities in the past have resulted in unnatural conditions, fire may be used to restore the natural order.

COMMENT LETTER 37

4625 Louisiana St. #8
San Diego, Cal, 92116
May 14, 1983

Merrill DeSpain District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nev., 89301

Mr. DeSpain:

In response to the recently-released draft EIS Wilderness Document, I urge several modifications.

1 I feel that Mount Grafton should have a substantial wilderness protection. It is a high, spectacular peak, and beneath it are rare, beautiful views and plant assemblages. I urge a 73,216 acre wilderness

2 Also, the Fortification Range must have wilderness protection. Its high ridges and huge quartzite domes are truly outstanding. I urge that you implement the conservationists' recommendation of 41,615 acres.

Finally, I urge greater protection for

COMMENT LETTER 37

3

the Worthington Canyon that what the EIS suggests. The cave & its vicinity are an excellent opportunity for a solitude type of experience. Please provide 47,633 acres of protection, not just the 17,500 acres offered.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions.

*Success
Frank Varnis*

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 37

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 73,216 acre, All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, including high peaks and diverse plant assemblages of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 38

May 12, 1983
5901 Broadway #1
Oakland, Ca. 94618

Merrill DeSpain, District Manager
Ely District, Bureau of Land Management
Route #5, Box 1, Ely, Nevada, 89301

Dear Sir:

I understand the Nevada Bureau of Land Management has released a Wilderness Draft Environment Impact Statement of the Ely District that threatens BLM wilderness in the Great Basin.

It suggests that Worthington Range be limited to 17,500 acres instead of the 47,633 acres requested. Also Fortification Range, a prime wildlife habitat and Mount Grafton one of its highest peaks and densely forested, are marked for "No Wilderness".

- 1 Conservationists urge 41,615 acres for Fortifications and 73,216 acres for Mount Grafton. In this way wilderness values will not be destroyed. I urge consideration in the above areas and endorsement of other areas, as outlined in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative.

Sincerely,


Marta Porter

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 38

Response Number 1

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternatives for the Fortification Range, Worthington Mountains, and Mount Grafton WSA's has been noted, as well as your support for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS for the remaining WSA's.

COMMENT LETTER 39

July 7, 1983

Mr. Merill DeSpain, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, NV 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

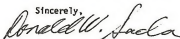
I offer the following in comment to the Schell Resource Area Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement.

I congratulate you in the treatment of opportunities for wilderness in your Resource Area but support the addition of acreage in some study areas and believe the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative should become the preferred alternative. The following are recommended changes:

1. Worthington Mountains - 23,587 acres of the wilderness study area should be designated as wilderness rather than the 17,500 acres recommended in the preferred alternative.
2. An area including Mt. Grafton has been studied for its wilderness potential. I believe that the 43,649 acres that includes Mt. Grafton meets the requirements for wilderness and should be designated as such. I do understand that there may be speculative mineral potential within this area but the designation of this 43,649 acres avoids most of these questionable conflicts.
- 2 3. Fortification Mountains - This is a superb Great Basin area that warrants being designated as wilderness. Your contention that the ridgeline is unsuitable for camping is no reason to eliminate this from consideration. I support the designation of 31,946 acres of this area as wilderness.

The particular comments listed above are all considered and included in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. I believe this alternative should be implemented. As your analysis states, between 90 and 99.9 percent of the variety of known speculative resources within the Schell Resource Area are outside of the acreage identified in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. Only this alternative provides a balance between protecting the wilderness values in the Schell Resource Area and the area dedicated to multiple use.

Sincerely,



Donald W. Sada
1850 Van Ness Ave.
Reno, Nevada 89503

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 39

Response Number 1

Your support for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS has been noted, especially for the Worthington Mountains, Mount Grafton, and the Fortification Range WSA's.

Response Number 2

The description of camping opportunities in the Fortification Range WSA has been modified to make clear that opportunities exist, but that they are less than outstanding. The quality of opportunities for camping is but one of many factors that were considered before recommending the area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

COMMENT LETTER 40

Mr. Atchill DeSpain
Ely District
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Star Route #5, Box #1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Mr. & Mrs. Cap Schoenfelder
Space #54, Crestview Park
600 Hot Springs Road
Carson City, Nevada 89701

April 27, 1983

Dear Sirs:

We are very concerned about vital omissions of important wilderness study area in the Schell draft environmental impact statement just released. We have seen pictures that deeply impressed us concerning wilderness in the district that should be recognized. These areas, either excluded as "non-wilderness" or made non-viable by acreage cuts, are in our view, outstanding and deserving of permanent wilderness protection. We once lived in Ely and possess some knowledge of the issues involved.

We are referring to three areas:

- (1) The Worthington Range, which had been recommended at 47,633 acres, and now cut to only 17,500 acres in the "preferred" alternative. We have long marvelled about the existence of Leviathan Cave in this unit, which is situated in a superb limestone crags setting. This range is "stacked on end", and much of the solitude outside the cave itself, is gained from breathtaking views to the slopes below. These lower slopes must be restored to the wilderness, otherwise future incursions will destroy vital unspoiled approaches. We do therefore ask that you restore adequate acreages to these vital approaches to the range itself.
- (2) Fortification Range- This is a beautiful mountain dome area which is so unique to Nevada. It is like having a miniature version of the Black Hills, and if the latter isn't unique then nothing in America is! Again, we saw pictures of high sawtooth ridges and hidden canyons. There were also some of the most scenic white monoliths we've ever seen in this state. In addition, it is believed to be a critical wildlife habitat area. We urge restoration of the 41,615 acres as the area deserving full wilderness protection.
- (3) Mount Grafton- Similarly, we cannot understand the "no wilderness" recommendation for this 73,216 acre primitive area. We understand it has major occurrences of bristlecone pines, with unusual regeneration down to elevations of only 7,000 feet. It has clear, unpolluted brooks with trout. This is a densely forested ridge, with a main peak rising over 10,500 feet, and has a Rocky Mountain character that is very unique for Nevada. Many of our friends have hiked in the area and found its solitude to be exceptional. Again, we urge its restoration as a "preferred" wilderness area.

Because of these omissions, we feel the BLM's "preferred" alternative does not reflect your Congressional mandate to designate wilderness in a meaningful way. Therefore, we urge adoption of the "Wilderness Emphasis Alternative" in the final impact statement. Indeed, we feel the wilderness areas in this alternative are rare endorsement... provided the above areas are suitably recognized.

We wish this statement to be incorporated into the hearing record.

Cap Schoenfelder

Kathy Schoenfelder

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 40

Response Number 1

Your preference for the 47,633 acre All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the lower slopes would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your preference for the 41,615 All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The beautiful ridges and wildlife habitat have been noted in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

Your preference for the 73,216 acre, All Wilderness Alternative has been noted. The high quality wilderness values, including trout and bristlecone of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

COMMENT LETTER 41

2921 NW 53rd Street
Lighthouse Point, Florida 33064
May 28, 1985

Mr. Merrill L. DeSpain
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Star Route 1, Box 1
Ely, Nevada Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

1 I support the wilderness alternative for The Schell Resource Area. Please include this letter in the comments on Draft Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement. I support the designation of 424,585 acres in the wilderness area. It is important that these remaining tracts of wilderness be saved for their wildlife (including the mountain lion), natural, primitive and ~~unimpaired~~ scenic values.

Sincerely,

Red Seard

Red Seard

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 41

Response Number 1

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 42

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
Ely District Manager
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Star Route #5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Re: Schell Resources Area
DEIS on Wilderness

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

I strongly urge you to adopt the recommendations of the Public Lands Task Force of the Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association as regards the Schell Resource area DEIS on wilderness.

Having visited some of the areas included in the DEIS I can attest to their need for wilderness protection. We in the west-and especially the citizens of Nevada-are extremely privileged to have such a natural resource treasure so at hand. While many of us do not or cannot take the time to explore all of them, we clearly understand the value of these wilderness areas and the need to protect them for future generations. Now is the time to afford that protection. Should we fail to act now some of these irreplaceable areas could be lost forever to short-term gains. The botanical treasures of Mount Grafton, Lewisian Cave in the spectacular Worthington Range and the alternately brooding and blinding mood of the Fortification Range must be kept unsullied.

Fortunately, you have an experienced and dedicated organization such as NORA to assist in the development of wilderness programs in Nevada. The expertise that NORA has developed over its years of existence is unmatched anywhere in the west. No other organization, public or private, has as clear an understanding of the issues of public land administration and the need for wilderness preservation. Again, I heartily endorse their recommendations in this matter.

Sincerely,


Lewis Shea
1719 Poplar
Davis, CA 95616

cc Charles Watson

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 42

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Public Lands Task Force's wilderness recommendation has been noted, especially for the Mount Grafton, Worthington Mountains, and the Fortification Range MSA's.

COMMENT LETTER 43

10 JUNE 83

Dear Sir,

Please reconsider designating Mount Grafton, Fortification Range, and Worthington Range as wilderness. Preservation grows more precious. We can go elsewhere for energy; we can recycle already mined metals. For all the other WSA's in the Wilderness, Emphasis Alternative I am grateful.

* But we can't
create Nature.

Thanks sincerely,
Jeffery J. Smith
Jeffery J. Smith

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 43

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS has been noted, especially for the Mount Grafton, Worthington Mountains, and the Fortification Range WSA's.

COMMENT LETTER 44

Wolf Springs Forest

Route 2, Box 83
Minong, Wisconsin 54859

May 16, 1983

Merrill DeSpain, D.M.
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Dept. of Interior
Star Route, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

I am writing you in reference to three Wilderness Study Areas--Mt. Grafton, Fortification Range and Worthington Range--which constitute some of Nevada's finest scenic and natural wonders.

1 As the first B.L.M. Director to seek protection of unique natural and culturally significant areas I urged that full consideration be given to including adequate surrounding lands in order to buffer the unique values we seek to preserve. By reducing Worthington by one-third, this integrity safeguard is sacrificed. Similarly, any reductions in Mt. Grafton or Fortification Range would have their "doors" thrown open to adverse intrusions and pressures.

My plea to you is to stand fast in the face of the already discredited and exploitive pressures which seek to sacrifice these outstanding areas to short-term greed. They represent a tiny fraction of public lands in Nevada--an investment for which posterity will honor our generation's foresight if we make it or curse it if we fail to do so.

Respectfully yours,

Charles H. Stoddard
Charles H. Stoddard

P.S. Kindly include this letter with your EIS and public hearing comment record.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 44

Response Number 1

Your support for the Mount Grafton, Fortification Range, and Worthington Mountain WSA's has been noted. The BLM has made some changes in the Final EIS to include 30,115 acres as wilderness for the Mount Grafton WSA and to expand the Worthington Mountain WSA by 9,000 acres. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

COMMENT LETTER 45

June 8, 1985

Mr. Merrill DeSpain
Ely District Manager
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Star Route #5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain,

I write you to express my support for the NORA recommendation for the Schell Resource area. The general Schell area is a unique botanical and wilderness resource that should be provided the maximum possible protection by BLM.

Please adopt the NORA recommendation and consider the environmental values of the area in the DEIS and in the final designation.

Thank you.

Phyllis Tichinin
620 F. SO. 95616
Davis CA

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 45

Response Number 1

Your preference for the NORA wilderness recommendation has been noted.

COMMENT LETTER 46

Forty-Sixth Floor
333 South Grand Avenue
Los Angeles 90071

May 24, 1983

Mr. Merrill DeSpain, Manager
Ely District, Bureau of Land Management
Route #5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada 89301

Dear Mr. DeSpain:

Few genuine wilderness areas are left in the United States with all the values to future generations of Americans that they possess. Of these few, Nevada's desert mountains are among the wildest and least disturbed.

I beg of you to consider whether it is wise to permit the exploitation of these still largely pristine areas in our lifetime.

It is my hope that a large area in the Fortification Mountains and around Mt. Grafton will be permanently set aside by the BLM as wilderness, protected from mineral exploration, road building and other man-made intrusion. The State of Nevada and the Nation deserve no less.

Respectfully yours,

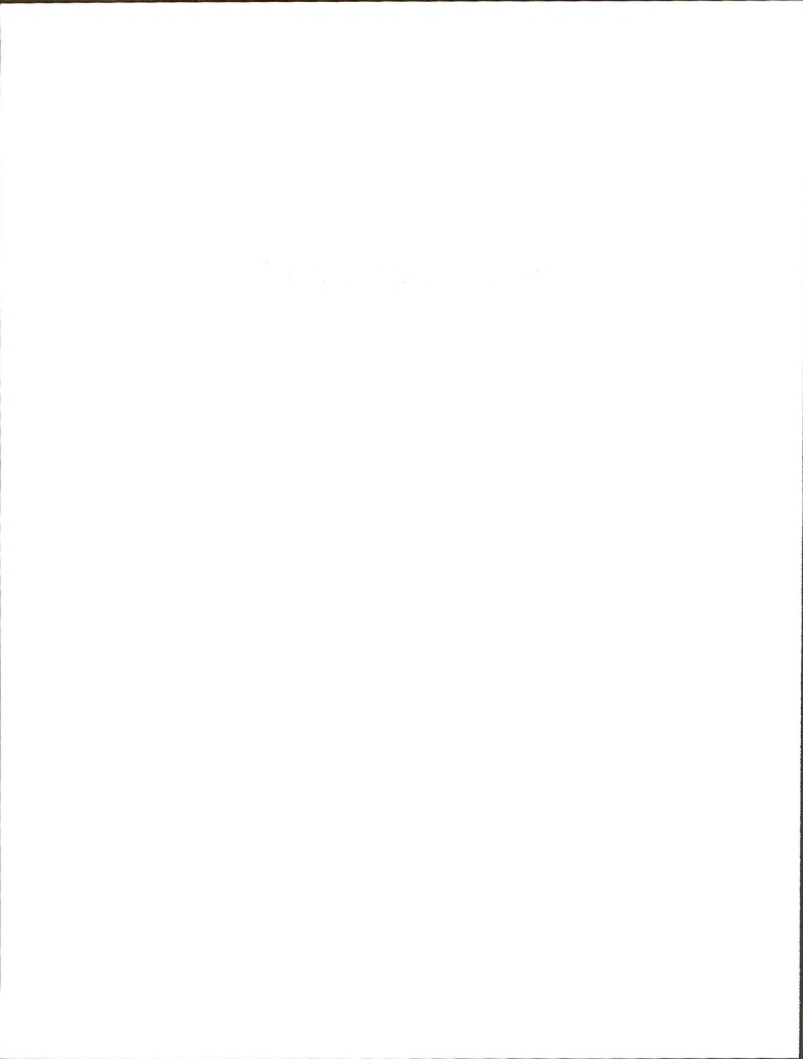

Francis M. Wheat

FMW:ke

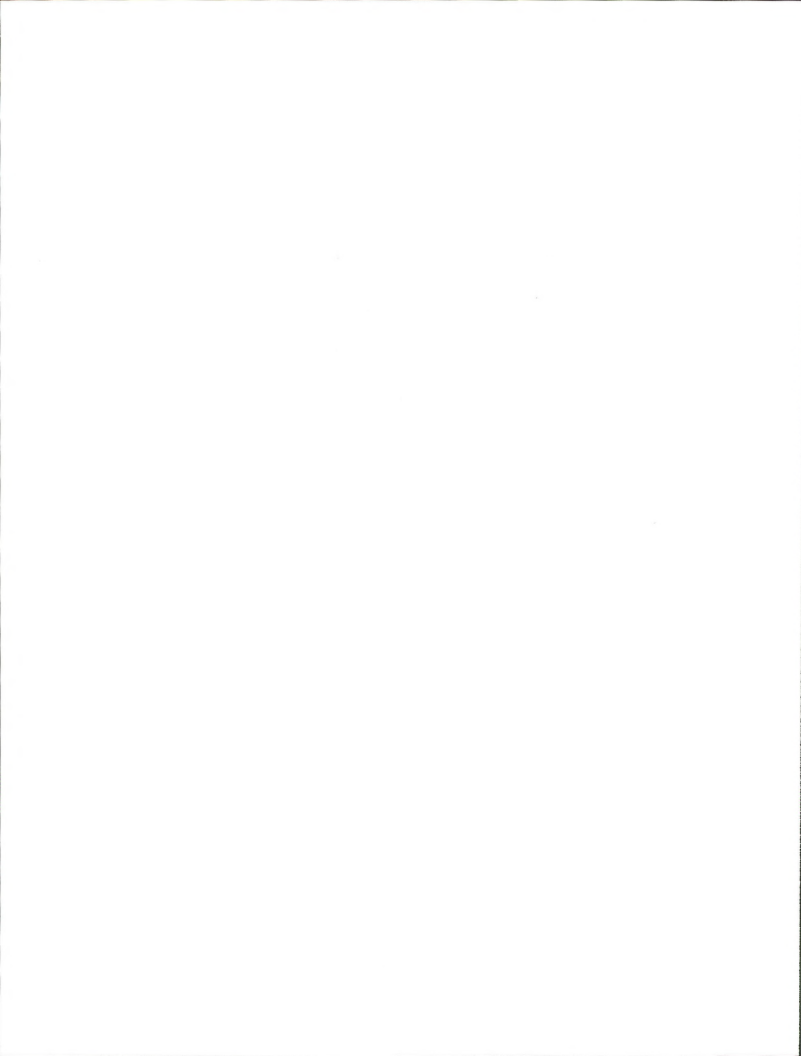
RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 46

Response Number 1

The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative for the Mount Grafton NSA was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.



ORAL TESTIMONY



TESTIMONY 1

MR. WARREN: My environmentalist friends are going to get off easy this evening because I have been in the legislature watching the bills and to see that not too many bad things happen to the industry, which has taken 95% of my time. I looked this over while having dinner out there. So I am not as well informed as Dennis. But I do hope to follow up before your deadline with written testimony.

MR. SMOGHEY: Excuse me, Bob. For the record can we get your name and who you represent?

MR. WARREN: Yes, thank you. Bob Warren, Executive Secretary, Nevada Mining Association. I was looking for more information on the mineral aspects or the potential mineral resource in these areas because I am aware that a study has been done, a GEM study for BLM at BLM's expense, by a team of geologists which were hired to evaluate the areas under study here and in fact some thirty-six GRAs in Nevada with some forty-two areas of impact that is not included in this study. That information was not available at the time this study was prepared. It is now available, and I would recommend that a review be made to determine if the report understates the mineral potential of some of these areas.

Additionally, at the request of the BLM, my office was asked to put together a team of top-ranking geologists and geologic firms to evaluate the GEM Report, to see if the GEM Report, itself, was adequate and covered the basis thoroughly because the GEM Report offers were limited by the budget constraints in time to largely a search of the existing literature, and were unable to get out into the field except on a few instances to double-check some areas of particularly high interest. I put this team together, nine of the top geologists and exploration firms in the Reno area, which means that there are nine of the top in the nation which means that they are nine of the top in the world because Nevada is the site now for some of the most extensive exploration activities for minerals anywhere in the United States, and as a consequence, has drawn the top talent from throughout the free world.

They reviewed the GEM studies and because these people have been in the field and, in some instances, were actually drilling for minerals in the area in which the GEM study was unaware of the drilling. They provided substantial additional first-hand information which has now been made

TESTIMONY 1

available and has been submitted to Mr. Spang and to the base geologists here in Reno for BLM.

I would hope that you would take a look at these reports, too, because they condense the information that was gathered at the expense of these companies with many millions of dollars of expenditure and thousands of hours of field time to evaluate the mineral potential.

They are there because they feel that there are minerals in the area. They are spending their employer's money, the accounts are extended into Nevada because of that potential. And they have found that the Schell Range deserves, as does many of the other areas, a very close consideration for mineral potential. That information, since we do not have time to elaborate on geologic data here, I will attempt to submit as I study each of the areas more thoroughly when the legislature closes. And I hope I am able to address this. I would like to make an overview-type statement, I guess, would be the best way to approach it this evening.

On geologic data here, I will attempt to submit as I study each of the areas more thoroughly when the legislature closes. And I hope I am able to address this. I would like to make an overview-type statement, I guess, would be the best way to approach it this evening.

One of the deficiencies of these resource reports and my environmentalist friends are tired of hearing say this, but it remains a fact, is the fact that they have not addressed the full potential of negative economic impacts of wilderness. In particular, they have failed to address the potential negative impact of the buffer zone or integral vista concept which, again, locally I am told by some of the environmentalists is the idea; that simply is not a good idea. We are not going to push the buffer zone concept. We think it is not appropriate. It would tie up too much land. It would lower the potential for development of the foothills and valleys upon which people make their living. Yet, that message has not reached the leadership in Washington because the environmental groups in Washington are busily pushing this concept, and have the bill drafted right at this moment and are arguing over how far the boundaries will reach.

So, that is a fact. We are going to be faced with the buffer zone concept for wilderness eventually, although at this time they are arguing over

TESTIMONY 1

perke, but it will be extended to the wilderness. And this would then preclude for instance, the potential for development of the oil industry that this study identifies as very great in that particular area because most of the oil drilling will be done in the valleys or in the foothills, and it will be within sight of some of these wilderness areas which would be offensive to the wilderness experience of some of the people using the properties.

As a consequence, they could and will, I am sure, lodge a complaint or bring a lawsuit to halt these activities if they were to occur after a wilderness area had been designated within the buffer zone to eye-sight concept. That, of course, impacts the same for the mining industry, if any mining activities were attempt to occur near the wilderness which would not only have visual impacts, but would have sound impacts. And these kinds of impacts are not sufficiently recognized.

I would urge that you take advantage of that GEM Report, which you paid for and the report that we have done which was a substantial amount of time invested by these people to put this together, and field time prior to that to see if you cannot upgrade your insights into the mineral potential, which is recognized by, again, some of the top exploration geologists in the world, the Schell Range Area, the Schell Resource Area, or very high indeed.

It is not identified here adequately. They failed to recognize the models and the sophisticated geologic inference that are now causing companies or permitting companies to discover the common type, the Freeport type, the gold mineralization that it was not recognized 15 years ago, and is now becoming a science that is rapidly bringing fruition some major new discoveries in Nevada. And these areas, some of these areas, have that kind of potential.

So, I will content myself with this overview, and recommend that you take that information into consideration.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 1

Response Number 1

The mineral impact section has been rewritten, incorporating new data, including the GEM studies, and your GEM evaluations.

Response Number 2

Impacts resulting from buffer zones are not considered since the BLM's Wilderness Management Policy expressly forbids such zones.

Response Number 3

The impacts of sights and sounds from mining activities outside the suitable areas are considered, where warranted, as manageability problems affecting apparent naturalness or opportunities for solitude and recreation.

Response Number 4

The potential for disseminated gold is recognized where the geology is favorable. The boundaries of the Meopah Spring WSA, for instance, have been adjusted in the Proposed Action to exclude an area of such potential.

TESTIMONY 2

MR. WATSON: My name is Charles Watson. I am Director of the Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association, Carson City. We are celebrating our 25th anniversary this year. My organization has been involved in the inventorying and the study of BLM public land areas since 1958. And the Schell Resource Area was not the original area concerned. Obviously, we started our resource in Northwestern, Nevada and worked our way east. And around 1964, we began to give the Ely District very serious investigation.

A number of the wilderness study areas that appear in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative appear to be in order for what we believe to be the final action on wilderness in the Schell Resource Area. We certainly do endorse many of the areas identified in the Preferred Wilderness Alternative such as the Worthington Range, what we call the Seaman Range, which is listed in here as Weepah Spring. We have always known it as the Seaman Range because of the incredible ponderosa pine forests that exists in the area, plus the towering cliffs and ridges that exist in that area. We think that it is one of the incredible places in Nevada.

The other area that we were really astonished to see omitted were Mt. Grafton, the Fortifications, and all too much myopia has been demonstrated in assessing the Worthington Range. I am not submitting a statement at this time, tonight because we will be submitting a statement later on.

However, off the top of my head, I have to say this about the Worthingtons. It is a stacked on end, limestone ridge, containing ancient bristlecone pines and other forests. And the towering limestone cliffs and all of the spires that exist in this area, that, alone, would recommend the area as wilderness. However, the all-inspiring existence of the Leviathan Cave with its extensive systems, interior systems, have occurring need for protection.

What appalls us, though, is the fact that in the analysis of the Worthington Range, that not enough consideration was made to the fact that the prime wilderness experience is derived by looking down on extensive, untouched alluvial fans. Much of these alluvial fans have been eliminated in the preferred alternative which, we believe, is a tragedy. We would recommend that the wilderness extend further down the alluvial fans to the elevations of 8,000 feet both on the west, and the east approaches to the Worthington Range.

TESTIMONY 2

We view this as essential to have the wilderness experience in the Worthington Range. The Fortifications are a wondrous example. As a matter of fact, if we were to miniature the Black Hills and bring them to Nevada, you would get some idea of what the Fortifications are like.

Fortifications are loaded with towering spires of quartzite and other complex formations that make a magnificent dome-shaped area. I agree it is very dry place. However, there are hidden places well-forested that can be camped upon. They are located on the top ridges. They are little hidden swales which are remarkably protected and cannot be seen from anywhere around, except when you get on top of the ridges and look down. These little hidden pockets are exceptional. They are unnamed, by the way. But, there is one huge swale on the west side that is extremely pristine, based upon my exploration to the area. I visited the area, hiked the area. I have also flown over it extensively by airplane and I have examined numerous cartographic sources with regard to the thing called the "Gouge Eye." The "Gouge Eye" is a remarkable approach on the west end that should be put into this Fortification Wilderness.

Finally, I might point out also in regard to Fortification is the remarkable fact that it is a known habitat for mountain lions and golden eagles. It is an exceptional raptor area. The Mt. Grafton area is one of the first areas that we have studied in the Schell Resources Area. It was an area that was well-known to a miner friend of mine by the name of James Hulse, Sr. It was Mr. Hulse who was active in mining in Nevada for thirty years, who was one of the great advocates of mining. Yet, he believed Mt. Grafton was so exceptional that it outweighed any of the minor and insignificant minerals that do occur in here.

I might point out that the area has been gone over with a fine-tooth comb for at least 60 years and no major production is now taking place in the range. I am a believer in minerals having priority when they create jobs and when they contribute meaningful to the economy of the state. This has not happened in Mt. Grafton.

On the other hand, what we have are astonishing values in terms of groves of ancient bristlecone pines along the upper ridge on this mountain which is over 10,900 feet elevation, the highest mountain in the State of

Nevada. We also observed, during our investigation, and by the way I brought this area to the attention of the University of Arizona, Tree Ring Research Laboratory a couple of years ago. And, they, in turn, remarked that the area was exceptional in that it had regeneration of bristlecone pines which is not seen in the Great Basin elsewhere.

The regeneration of bristlecone pines, mixed in with limber pine is seen down as low as 7,000 feet. Now, that is really remarkable in Nevada or anywhere for bristlecone. I am talking about Pinus longeva, not Pinus aristata. One of the things they showed when I showed pictures, you can see it over here in this scrapbook if you care to, after the meeting is over with, was the occurrence of Sonora succulents that mixed in with the bristlecone pine which is a Hudsonian species. In other words, lower Sonora. I have to cut my thing short. The studies that have been done concerning bristlecone pines in the Great Basin, and I am talking about the White Mountains clear over to the Rocky Mountains, have clearly shown that most of the occurrences of the Pinus longeva do not have regeneration. They are hanging on, they are going extinct. At least that was thought until we saw Mt. Grafton.

I want to recommend to you, also, the other areas in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. Time does not permit me to go into these other areas and discuss them as I would like. But I would like to conclude my remarks by urging reconsideration of the Golden Gate Range, which lies adjacent to the Worthington Range. This is a huge, El Capitan-style cliff, over 2,000 feet high. It rises straight up. We have reason to believe that it is an important raptor area. We have reason to believe that it does contain rare and endangered plants. So with that, thank you very much.

Response Number 1

There is some merit to your suggestion that inclusion of the alluvial fans would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action for the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve this setting.

Response Number 2

Your support for the Fortification Range has been noted. The wilderness qualities you mention such as the highly scenic geologic features and wildlife habitat has been documented in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The lack of mineral production, as well as the high wilderness values were some of the reasons leading to a suitable recommendation of 30,115 acres for the Mount Grafton WSA in the Proposed Action.

Response Number 4

The high quality wilderness values, including bristlecone and high peaks, of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 5

The BLM's wilderness inventory revealed that the Golden Gate Range lacked mandatory wilderness characteristics. This area was dropped from wilderness consideration in 1980 by the State Director.

TESTIMONY 3

"My name is Bart Koehler. My address is Box 891, Ely, Nevada. I am a field associate for the Nevada Wilderness Association. I have reviewed your files, scoping documents, been in many of the areas in question, have examined maps and photos of the rest. I would like my comments to be part of the official hearing record.

"The following are my comments:

"Basically, the EIS is well written and an understandable document. Obviously a lot of hard work went into its preparation.

"Unfortunately, the Preferred Alternative falls short of protecting the prime wilderness resource lands in the Schell Resource Area. This is particularly true since Mount Grafton and the Fortification Range have been excluded from the alternative, while other areas have been reduced in size by various bureaucratic pressure devices.

"I've been in the Fortification at least five times this past year. In my own mind, there is no viable excuse for leaving the Forts out of the Preferred Alternative. There are few, if any, real conflicts in the area. Conflicts cited in your EIS tend to be manufactured or exaggerated. The Fortifications are indeed a stronghold of wildness and special rugged beauty -- yet you have chosen to create reasons to eliminate the obvious worth of the area.

"Beyond this, your Wilderness Emphasis Alternative eliminates conflicts with oil and gas. Mineral conflicts do not exist. Likelihood of vegetative manipulation in the southern range is highly unlikely due to budget constraints.

"Mount Grafton. This lofty mountain range has fallen victim to mineral speculation. Wilderness has not been exchanged for a proven resource. Instead, the admitted high wilderness values were overturned by "speculative mineral potential" (pg. 44) in the central and southern part of the study area.

"To add insult to heavy injury, the Preferred Alternative offers Mount Grafton only a footnote of possible protection. (pg. 97) The BLM says they will consider recommending a portion of the area for withdrawal from mineral entry. "Consider" certainly doesn't swell with purpose. The word consider wasn't substituted by the word propose. We are simply left with a hollow hope

TESTIMONY 3

for Mount Grafton.

"Why was the White Rock area (acknowledged to have poor wilderness values) carried into the Preferred Alternative -- when Mount Grafton and the Fortification (in my opinion containing high wilderness values) were dropped from consideration? A side by side comparison of the true values and real conflicts of the three areas would end up with the White Rock dropping out.

"Given the established parameters of your EIS, I must go on record in full support of the All Wilderness Alternative. The alternative embraces only ten percent of the Schell Resource Area. It is the least you can do for the natural integrity of the land.

"In answer to all the outcries against this alternative, I recommend reading pages 87 and 88 of the Draft EIS. In part it reads 'there will be no significant impact on the livestock industry' and 'economic impacts to energy and minerals are judged to be insignificant.'

"In addition to the All Wilderness Alternative, I would like to recommend that the lands north of the current bogus boundary on the northern end of the Fortifications be added in full. I have discussed this in detail with the District Office and yet a road that does not exist, still serves as the northern boundary.

"Also, lands previously inventoried as No. 246, located south of the current Weepah Spring boundary, should be added to the USA. This would certainly add a wide diversity and expanded dimension to the area.

"Weepah Spring is a magnificent area with very few man-made impacts. In regards to this document, portions of Weepah Spring should not be thrown out due to illegal road building and mineral exploration.

"If you fail to choose the All Wilderness Alternative, then certainly the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative is far superior to the Preferred Alternative in the EIS.

"Thank you for this opportunity to comment. I will submit more detail written comments before the July 8 deadline.

"Bart Koehler."

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 3

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Fortification Range has been noted. The area's ruggedness and geologic beauty has been documented in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 2

A more extensive minerals analysis was conducted in the Final EIS. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 3

A more intensive evaluation of the wilderness characteristics has been attempted in the Final EIS.

Response Number 4

Your preference for the All Wilderness Alternative has been noted.

Response Number 5

The shape and size of the WSA's was determined in 1980 with the publication of the Final Intensive Wilderness Inventory Decisions. At this point in the wilderness process it would be inappropriate to make major alterations in WSA boundaries.

TESTIMONY 4

DR. SCHOLL: Good evening. I am Roger Scholl from Reno, Wilderness Committee Chairman for the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Toiyabe Chapter appreciates this opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the wilderness studies in the Schell Resource Area. Wilderness is an important component of the multiple-use management of public lands. Multiple-use management obviously does not mean every use, including livestock grazing, mining, motorized and primitive recreation, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, wilderness, timber harvesting, reservoirs, power lines, roads and archaeological resource protection, all occurring on every acre.

Rather, it means a balanced mosaic of uses, each occurring where it is most appropriate and on suitable land. Until recently, wilderness has not been a formally designated use of the public lands. Only a de facto use, where areas have remained undeveloped. But I believe we all can see that the steady development pressures here in the nation's fastest growing state can eliminate our unprotected wilderness in a short time.

Of the 4-1/2 million acre Schell Resource Area, only 10% qualifies for wilderness study. And less than half of that is being recommended for designation by the BLM. The historical pattern of land use on the resource area has already struck a balance where non-wilderness uses occupy or will have available for the 90% of the land.

It would seem that a reasonable pattern of multiple use on the Schell Resource Area would include a few percent of the lands as wilderness for the protection that it affords sensitive watersheds, archaeological resources and wildlife habitat, for the scientific base line that can provide on unmanipulated ecosystems, as well as for the primitive escapes from our mechanized world.

We also need a few percent of our land and its original natural state, just to know it is there. The BLM is to be complimented for recommending as suitable for wilderness preservation, portions of five of the eight WSAs in its Preferred Alternative. Each of the areas is recommended. Far South Egans, White Rock Range, Parantip Peak, Worthington Mountains, and Weepah Springs contain very little conflict with non-wilderness resources or land uses. And we believe each has excellent wilderness values.

TESTIMONY 4

However, we believe the Preferred Alternative should be improved in several crucial aspects along the lines of the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative which we support.

First, the heart of the spectacular Mt. Grafton area should be recommended for wilderness. This is a very scenic alpine wilderness and, in fact, encompasses 10,990 foot Mt. Grafton, the highest land managed by the BLM in Nevada. The area is the only one of eight WSAs in the Schell Resource Area offering fishing. It also offers habitat for such animals as elk, deer, mountain lions, raptors and potentially bighorn sheep. Blue vegetation, including limber and bristlecone pine, the latter having one tree dated at 1,748 years. White fir and colorful aspen groves. These outstanding values have been previously recognized by the designation of two scenic areas, Mt. Grafton and North Creek. This area, alone, accounts for 27% of the total estimated recreation use of all eight WSAs.

The extensive boundary reduction of this 43,649 acre wilderness proposal from the original 73,000 acre WSA has removed the majority of any actual resource conflicts and manageability problems. The remaining area of purely speculative mineral potential should not be a reason to drop the entire area. If not designated as wilderness, impacts that destroy wilderness are expected in the area.

Second, the beautiful Fortification Range with its heavy forest and extremely scenic rock formations should be recommended as wilderness. The BLM's argument that the ridgeline may be too rugged for hiking or camping is surely no reason to not recommend the area. Visits to the area by Chapter members show the area's wilderness values are higher than those indicated by the BLM.

Third, the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative includes better boundaries on several units such as the Worthington Mountains which would better protect wilderness values in the long run. In this alternative, the seven areas out of the 4-1/4 million acre resource area, some 7%, leave most of the land available for non-wilderness uses.

BLM's analysis shows that 90% to 99.9% of various known or speculative

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resources such as firewood or minerals are available outside of the wilderness recommendations of this alternative. Only the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative provides a reasonable balance between protecting the outstanding wilderness values of the Schell Resource Area and providing for multiple uses of the land.

We thank you for this opportunity to present our views, and we will submit further written comments detailing our recommendations.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 4

Response Number 1

The high wilderness values you mention such as the high peaks, elk, fishing opportunities, etc. have been documented in Chapter 3. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

Your support for recommending the Fortification Range as wilderness has been noted. The wilderness analysis for this area has been expanded. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The Wilderness Emphasis Alternative for the Worthington Mountain WSA from the draft EIS has been adopted as the Proposed Action in the Final EIS.

TESTIMONY 5

MR. CHIGLIERI: Thank you very much. It is a pleasure to be here this evening to talk in favor of wilderness. My name is Dennis Chiglieri. I am a resident of Reno, Nevada. I did not prepare any formal testimony, but I have read the Draft EIS, and I have to say that I am very happy to support the BLM recommendations with a couple of exceptions. I would like to see the Mount Grafton area and the Fortification Range added back in to the Preferred Alternative for the BLM. I believe that the document offered fairly weak arguments for excluding these areas. For example, in the Grafton area, one of the arguments was based on speculative mineral potential which, I believe, would be more suitably addressed if it were studied as a Wilderness Study Area, as opposed to eliminating it at this stage.

The Fortification Range, I felt that the statements as to its nature were somewhat misleading. I do not believe an issue should be made of the area's suitability for camping or anything along that lines. If it meets the qualifications as a Wilderness Area, it should be studied as such. I would like to offer a couple of comments on the Draft EIS, itself. I found that although the document tended to be fairly thorough, and there seemed to be area's suitable for camping or anything along that lines. If it meets the qualifications as a Wilderness Area, it should be studied as such. I would like to offer a couple of comments on the Draft EIS, itself. I found that although the document tended to be fairly thorough, and there seemed to be some attempt to justifying the decisions, I found the maps to be fairly confusing and difficult to understand, requiring quite a bit of time for each map to understand the features which were being represented. And the features which were represented, I believe, were severely over-emphasized in some cases, such as fence lines, which were shown as being extremely impacting on the maps. And, in fact, on the grounds they have very little impact. And the wilderness certification, which have taken place from Congress indicate that fences are allowed to be included in Wilderness Areas.

So, I did not really see the maps when they indicated large fence line problems were really accurate or proper.

I believe we have pretty adequately paired down the wilderness in the Schell Resource Area from the 125 or more areas which were under consideration to

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these few areas which were under consideration to these few areas that we have here before us tonight. So, I would like to thank the BLM for the work they have done on this, and recommend at least the recommendations include Mount Grafton and Fortification Range. Thank you very much.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 5

Response Number 1

Due to public comment on Mount Grafton on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

The wilderness analysis for the Fortification Range has been expanded. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The maps have been redrafted for clarity sake.

TESTIMONY 6

MAX MCCROSKEY: Our argument is not just with any one of them. Of course we're selfishly very interested in the Weepah area because of mineralization, and we really feel mineralization should have been one of the prime considerations, not a secondary consideration, as it now stands in your program. My question to Wayne here is why one or several of these areas were dropped, yet the other one is there, and yet there may be mineralization in both.

I would just like to know, what is the criteria you used for separation. Really, the bottom line is, do we really need the wilderness: I cannot argue against your paper. Our argument is in conflict with what you want to hear here. It would be in a written thing, but not here. I really don't understand how you can draw a line around a group of mountains, and this is a wilderness. Draw another one and say no, this one is out. We will take this one.

I would like to have you explain not just to me, but to these people why? I think it is the BLM's responsibility to say why. Even though I have read the EIS and I know, I don't think all the people here know. I would appreciate it if you would explain it to me. I don't want to be out of line, but its something that should be explained.

WAYNE HOWLE: I think after the hearing, I can answer questions. Right now the procedure will not allow it.

MAX MCCROSKEY: Okay, well then the bottom line is on the Weepah thing, we feel the line should be drawn back because of mineralization on the secondary study. Top of the mountain we have no problem with. Of course it has been staked since 1979, and prior to that it is mineralized, it would not have been staked. Maybe it was a gamble or whatever, but the damn thing was staked as mineralized, it should not be in the area. Did I say anything wrong, Bruce?

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 6

Response Number 1

A portion of the heavily claimed area in the northwestern corner of the WSA, where interest seems to be most intense has been excluded from the suitable portion in the Proposed Action. A large part of the remaining area is recommended suitable for designation. This is in recognition of the WSA's high wilderness values and due to the speculative nature of the mineral potential. This recommendation is subject to change based on the findings of the USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral survey that is mandated by law for all areas recommended suitable for designation.

TESTIMONY 7

MR. MILLER: My name is Glenn Miller. I am Chairman of the Toiyabe Chapter. I have very little to add to the comments of Roger Scholl and Marjorie Hill except to support, generally, what they said in adding a couple of specific comments. First of all, I would like to complement BLM on the EIS. I found it to be quite readable, and generally providing information in a very useful manner. It brought a lot of things I did not know, and I thought it to be quite helpful. Particularly in the comments that were made from the residents of the Ely area. I found them to be very helpful, indicating that the opposition to wilderness which existed very very strongly in the early 1970's has to, a substantial extent, gone away.

And, now the comments that are in opposition to wilderness and they are substantially less often times or they do not want anyone else to come and designating the area will just make more people come. And that is completely on the opposite side of what it used to be. And I think that is important. I think it is a public education process that will continue. And I think the support will grow.

Also, I would like to thank the BLM staff people. I think they have been very open and helpful, to all parties including the Sierra Club in making themselves available for answering questions and whenever they are in Reno, to make sure that they are available to meet with us. And I am sure it is the same way with other interest groups, also. We generally support the Preferred Alternative in the five areas that are indicated, but also would like to also see Mt. Grafton and the Fortification Range. I have been in a couple of the areas. Not in Mt. Grafton from what I have seen from the available information is indeed a spectacular of high mountain country. The competing uses of that area also appear to be quite slight, and there appears to be very little reason why that should not be included in the Wilderness Emphasis. As Ross Smith indicated, if it is recommended as a wilderness area, the large problem that was indicated of mineral potential will be decided one way or another.

I also think that the Fortification Range, to the same extent, should be recommended also. And it is, indeed, a spectacular scenic area with the high rocky cliffs and I think it will enhance the total wilderness values of the entire unit to also be designated; and also the Worthington area which is

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one of the ones I have been in, although not nearly as much as I would like to be.

Well, the major part of the recreational activity in the Worthington will probably be into a Leviathan Cave. It is an area that I hope to get to some time as soon as possible. I think that recommending that larger area would increase the wilderness values, and also decrease the amount of impact on Leviathan Cave by offering a larger unit. Thank you.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 7

Response Number 1

Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated for the Mount Grafton WSA with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action. The USGS/Bureau of Mines will complete their mineral survey on this suitable portion.

Response Number 2

The scenic values in the Fortification Range have been noted in Chapter 3. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The east boundary of the WSA has been revised in the proposed action in the final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres to preserve the wilderness values.

TESTIMONY 8

MR. PETERSON: My name is Kirk Peterson, and I not here tonight to represent the Mining Association, Cattleman's Association, Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Air Force, Power Companies, future wealthy, potentially rich, politically ambitious, drivers of ORVs, or the always inebriated. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of a group so small that I doubt if there is another one in this room.

I am speaking for human beings. Or, more correctly, homo sapiens. Just one of the millions of species of creatures that make up the mid-organisms in the ten-billion-year chain of life on earth. On behalf of the few remaining human beings and those still unborn, I am here tonight to tell you and all the other anthropocentric, materialistic apewits who will be involved in this game that you possess no moral, spiritual or rational right to make decisions which will effect the organism, earth.

If you can shed your concrete, plastic and steel shells. If you can climb Mt. Crofton without thoughts of riches, minerals, assemblages, board feet of lumber, intercontinental ballistic missile projectories, percent grades, multiple-use environmental impact statements, endangered species, political games, animal grazing allotments, utility corridors, vegetative cover or trophy heads.

If you could look at a creek cascading down the Fortification Range and know it is to the mountain as your blood is to yourself. If you could feel the earth beneath your feet, and know it is the fabric which makes up your flesh. If you could look upon the rabbits, deer and serpents, the grasses, flowers and trees; feel a kinship with life and the awe, respect and regret, the only rational predator feels, in their death, so that you may live. Then, for that instant you will become a homo sapien. The only creature capable of making reasonable decisions about our home and Mother Earth.

We human beings speak not on behalf of the coyote, eagles or pines. We speak for ourselves. But by the existence of the coyote, eagles and pines, we homo sapiens find the fullest quality of life. That is why we plead that all their small remaining domains, which you choose to call wilderness, be left alone. Be it 100 square feet in downtown Reno, or a half-million acres in the Schell Resource Area.

TESTIMONY 8

Only in wilderness, can human beings touch the earth whose infinite patience evolved us. Only in wilderness, can we understand this slowing turning system that will eventually extinct us. Always to wilderness, the in the Schell Resource Area.

Only in wilderness, can human beings touch the earth whose infinite patience evolved us. Only in wilderness, can we understand this slowing turning system that will eventually extinct us. Always to wilderness, the greatest homo sapiens go to exercise their unique capabilities, to touch the spirit, to wander and to dream.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 8

Response Number 1

Your support of wilderness is noted.

TESTIMONY 9

MS. SILL: I am Marjorie Sill. I am a resident of Reno. I have lived in Nevada almost 24 years now, and I am the conservation chair for the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club which encompasses all of Nevada and California, east of the Sierra Crest.

I have had a long interest in wilderness in Nevada, and particularly in the BLM areas, and with the passage of the Organic Act in 1876. I was extremely interested in the whole process of designating the WSAs and then choosing those areas which would be recommended for wilderness.

In general, I would like to say that I am pleased with the recommendations for the Schell Resource Area. We would support the Fer South Egan, the White Rock Range, Paria Peak, the Worthington Mountains, although we might like to see some additional acreage as designated in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. That would make 23,590 acres there, and the Weapah Spring Area. However, we feel that there are two glaring omissions in the recommendations. And I would like to speak to these omissions. The first one is Mount Grafton. Mount Grafton, itself the mountain, is the highest BLM mountain in Nevada, and I would like to read from John Hart's book, "Hiking the Great Basin." He says "Grafton Summit has an edge of the world feeling. To the south, the massive continues high, staying near 10,000 feet for several miles. Big limestone crags mark the landscape. To the north, it drops off emphatically to arid-looking country. You have the sense of standing on a mesa."

To the south, the massive continues high, staying near 10,000 feet for several miles. Big limestone crags mark the landscape. To the north, it drops off emphatically to arid-looking country. You have the sense of standing on a peak."

The BLM, itself, has highly recommended this area from the point of view of outstanding recreational and solitude opportunities. The two criteria which they seem to have used in rejecting this area, the criterion of manageability and the criterion of mineral resources. And I would like to speak to each of these.

In the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative, the size of the area has been cut down to a much smaller area. Let me see what it would be. 43,649 of the original 73,126 acres in the WSA. And this elimination of many of the

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1 conflicts, many of the cherrystone roads, the private property and so forth has eliminated most of the management conflicts in the area.

And so it seems that manageability is no longer a reason for rejecting the Mt. Grafton area. The second criterion which was used for rejection was evidently the idea of the mineral resources. And I would like to read from the conclusion of the technical report on the Mt. Grafton Area.

"There is an identified mineral resource in the study area, but the economic significance of known deposits is low. There is some potential for discovery of new deposits especially in the southern part of the area, oil and gas potential poses only a minor conflict." Again, the reduction of the boundaries from 73,000 to the 47,000 acres has done away with much of this mineral conflict. And, I would like to point out that the USGS is required, under law, to study extensively any area which is recommended for wilderness designation by the BLM. And this would certainly be a plus as far as knowing what mineral potential was there. The Mt. Grafton Area is an outstanding area. It is probably one of the most outstanding areas in the state, and not to recommend it would be a great loss to the wilderness potential of the state and of the Great Basin areas.

The second area that we would recommend be included that was omitted by the BLM is the Fortification Range. There seemed to be very few conflicts with the Fortification Range, and it is difficult to understand why this area has not received a recommendation for wilderness. Evidently, some people think that the area is less than outstanding because you cannot camp on the ridge. There is no water. There is a single ridge. But it is certainly possible to enjoy a very wonderful wilderness experience there, and to drop down to the benches on either side and camp. Water can be obtained there, and there is no reason why the area should be rejected for wilderness for this reason.

2 So, in summary, I would like to say that we agree with the BLM recommendations except that we feel that both Mt. Grafton and the Fortification Mountains should be included in the Wilderness recommendations. We will be sending in a written statement. Thank you very much.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 9

Response Number 1

The high quality wilderness values of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action.

Response Number 2

The wilderness analysis for the Fortification Range has been rewritten. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

TESTIMONY 10

CONNIE SINKINS: My name is Connie Sinkins, and I live in Panaca, Nevada. I am not sure, like Max said, if my comments are pertinent to the guidelines you have issued. If they are not, you will have to stop me, cause I'm going to give them until you do.

HEARING OFFICER: One question, will you state who you represent, yourself or other?

CONNIE SINKINS: I represent myself. I am in possession of a press release that came from the BLM office that says you are accepting comments on the merits of the Preferred Alternative in this book that you have prepared. Does that mean that you will not entertain comments on any other alternatives or subjects related to them at this time? You only want us to talk about your Preferred Alternatives? Or can we issue comments on, for instance, No Wilderness at all alternative, or the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative?

HEARING OFFICER: You can comment on anything you want that relates to these wilderness areas, the proposed or other.

CONNIE SINKINS: That is not the way the press release read. It says, we are accepting comments on the merits of the Preferred Alternative. If what I have here is not particularly appropriate, that is part of the reason. A wilderness area is actually, in my opinion, is degraded because it is designated as a wilderness. The great majority of people would never know about a wilderness area and the special qualities it has and should retain. I have a friend in Montana who owns a great amount of private acreage that is contiguous to a designated wilderness area. He has experienced a great deal of harassment, inconvenience and resource to his private facilities and things that are going on on his private land because of this wilderness area being next to him. People come out there and they think this is wilderness so they drive their big motorhome out to the edge of the wilderness. Then we will leave the motorhome and walk into the wilderness. The thing that sits next to the wilderness area suffers because of this attitude.

Your Proposed Wilderness Management Policy is too vague in many areas. For instance, in there you say a private right holder in a wilderness area will be given adequate access, but you don't go ahead and define what, in your terms, are adequate. It also says that adequate will be determined by the BLM. What is adequate?

TESTIMONY 10

You are not sure how you are going to manage a wilderness area once it is designated. Because of the high rate of employee changes and political changes that motivate you in your positions, you cannot keep your word on how you will manage or regulate a wilderness area. Things are changing from day to day as we all know.

I note in your plan that you are going to guard against overuse of the wilderness area by first using indirect methods and then using direct methods which include banning horseback travel in these areas.

The people who have had experience dealing with the BLM have a great deal of fear in what a BLM employee might term as misuse if he does not know what the vegetation that is here and what kind of use it will stand and what kind of use it will not stand. It is entirely possible that you might prematurely close off the access to the public, all public uses in a wilderness area.

In your assessment you say you will analyze overuse. I would like to have addressed, what are you going to do with this information after you have got it, and when are you going to do it?

Another thing, if a wilderness area catches fire, and is subsequently reseeded or revegetated in some manner, your book says you will never allow livestock grazing. I feel this is wrong. This would be very much out of balance with an area that is contiguous to a wilderness area that is under all kinds of multiple use, mining, grazing and recreation.

Another thing that I cannot understand is why the BLM and the Forest Service each have separate definitions as to what you consider to be a road and/or maintaining a road. I happen to be from a family that has had the privilege of being, or hunting internationally. We had found over the last 30 years that dealing with a wilderness area and getting in to hunt in a wilderness area is extremely expensive, increasingly more so as time goes on.

I submit to you, that if you create any of these wilderness areas, what you will be creating is a rich man's playground.

We went into an area where, if we had hunted in that wilderness area, first of all, you had to put up \$1,000. Then you had to have a guide go along with you. You could not go without a guide. How many of the general public people have this kind of financial resource to be able to use the wilderness

TESTIMONY 10

In this one sense?

I believe that each of the eight areas you are addressing tonight is unsuitable because they do not meet your own criteria. For instance, man's influence and the possibilities of solitude, specifically the area in Cave Valley contains several roads and any number of private water holdings. It is always a matter of trepidation to local people that anything the BLM has something to do with, if they get control, especially the water, it is going to be misused and mishandled.

The area around Fortification will always have the wilderness qualities it has today because of the nature of the terrain on that mountain which accepts only very limited access to the top of that area there. Table Mountain, I highly approve of dropping this from a wilderness area because it did not make sense to me to split that mountain right down the middle. There is a road up there, and you say, this side of the road is going to be wilderness. This side of the road is not going to be. It does not make sense to me. It ought to be all wilderness or none of it.

I had one BLM employee tell me he had never been on top of Table Mountain, only on his motorcycle. He had never walked up there and had never ridden a horse up there. That is the only way he had time to get there and look at it.

On White Rock, there are private land and water holdings there, too. There are many roads which provide for a great level of access as it is used today.

On the Faranip area, it has private land contained inside and contiguous to the wilderness area, and this to me, prevents it from having the solitude and the lack of man's influence that your guidelines specify. There has been a water development done, gone across private land in this area, without the private landowner's knowledge and/or consent, and it was done by the BLM.

This wilderness area is cupping around or cherry-picking the private land in that area. This area has mining deposits and current viable mining claim holdings.

The Worthington Mountains and the Timber Mountains, I am not familiar with that area, but I would strongly support the Limited Wilderness Alternative. Thank you very much.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 10

Response Number 1

The Wilderness Management Policy states, "States or persons, and their successors in interest, who own land completely surrounded by a wilderness area shall be given such rights as may be necessary to assure adequate access to that land. Adequate access is defined as the combination of routes and modes of travel which will, as determined by the BLM, cause the least lasting impact on the wilderness resource, and at the same time serve the reasonable purposes for which the State or private land is held or used."

Response Number 2

The Ely District BLM intends to begin monitoring the areas which it has recommended suitable for designation within the next few years to establish a baseline of data. Changes after designation will be detectable by comparison between conditions then and now. Measures can then be taken if needed to mitigate or reverse adverse influences on the land. Each case will necessarily be considered separately.

Response Number 3

The Wilderness Management Policy states that grazing will be allowed to continue up to preference levels in wilderness areas where grazing was practiced prior to designation, dependent only upon the conditions of the forage resources as determined by monitoring. Fire rehabilitation often calls for a temporary suspension of grazing until the plant community reestablishes itself, whether inside or outside of designated wilderness areas.

Response Number 4

The Bureau has no requirements for guide services within designated wilderness areas.

Response Number 5

Your support for the Preferred Alternative in the draft EIS for Table Mountain and the Fortification Range has been noted.

Response Number 6

The portion of the White Rock Range recommended preliminarily suitable for designation has only four documented roads or ways which penetrate it for a maximum distance of one mile. These are cherrystemmed out of the area and will remain open to vehicular use. There are no private inholdings within the area.

Response Number 7

Your preference for the Limited Wilderness Alternative from the draft EIS for the Worthington Mountains and the Weepah Spring WSA's have been noted.

TESTIMONY 11

MR. SMITH: My name is Ross Smith. I live in Reno, Nevada. I represent no one, save for myself, although I personally am a member of many environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club. I also am a Professor of Mineral Processing at the University of Nevada, and am a member of AIME. Now, I personally support the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative for the Schell Resource Area. In particular, I wish to speak out for wilderness protection for major portions of the Mt. Grafton and Fortification Range areas. In the case of Mt. Grafton, the major reason for excluding the area from the Preferred Alternative seems to be merely a moderate size region possessing, according to the PUGCO National, Inc. MX Resource Surveys, speculative mineral potential which is, in my opinion, a pretty weak reason for not recommending this for wilderness.

After all, if recommended for wilderness, an extensive geological mineral survey must be completed anyway. Concerning the Fortification Range, there seems to be even less reason for excluding it. Now, I have several other comments to make. I personally work in the mineral industry, as an educator of mineral engineers, as a sometimes consultant and as a mineral processing researcher. So it known, that not all of us who are in the industry are against wilderness.

In fact, many of us know and understand the wild areas of our country, and also know of the harm that the industry has and continues to do to our wild lands. Thus, many of us would like to see large areas set aside, safe from our own degradation. That is, from the curse of road building, open cuts, tailings, etc. Anyway, the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative is certainly a modest enough request for the Schell Resource Area. The acreage probably should be larger. Consider that the area is roughly one-tenth of the BLM land in Nevada. I gather of the order 4-1/4 million acres, that is in the total area there is of the order of 6 million acres of all types of land. The Wilderness Emphasis comes up with only 288,000 acres, which is certainly not very much compared with the total acreage involved. Has our wild Nevada heritage so fled us that that is all there is left of it, and is one of the state's more remote sections. Do we really want a road up every single mountain and in every single canyon in the state? Are some of these sacred to us?

TESTIMONY 11

Do we sell out our last wild areas so cheaply, not even to a high bidder, just for speculation? At least in the case of Mt. Grafton? I have no more to say. Thank you, gentlemen and ladies.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 11

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS has been noted.

Response Number 2

Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated for the Mount Grafton WSA. This alternative recommended 30,115 acres as preliminarily suitable for wilderness pending the USGS/Bureau of Mines survey reports required by law. This alternative was accepted as the Proposed Action in the Final EIS.

TESTIMONY 12

MS. STRICKLAND: Thank you. My name is Rose Strickland. I live in Reno, Nevada. I guess you might call me a wilderness user. I enjoy wilderness, especially in Nevada Great Basin wilderness.

First of all, I would like to support the wilderness alternative for the Schell Resource Area supporting wilderness for the Far South Egan, the White Rock Range, Parnsop Peak, Weepah Spring, and the larger number of acres, the 23,387 for the Worthington Mountains. I agree with Marjorie. I feel that two omissions were made, rather undefensibly. The Mt. Grafton Area and the Fortification Range should be added back in to the wilderness recommendations.

Mt. Grafton is an outstanding area and the state already has two designated scenic areas within it, high recreational use. I found that the rationale of speculative mineral potential to be outrageously poor as an excuse to eliminate these areas. I do agree with Bob Warren that adequate geological studies should be made of the areas prior to the recommendation. But then we should go with that, and not depend on speculative mineral development. Use it as an excuse to eliminate wilderness in our state.

I found, as a camper and as a hiker the excuse of eliminating the Fortification because you could not camp on the ridges to be very poor, also. You can camp on the ridge line if you want to, but most campers in Nevada do not choose to do that unless there is something fairly spectacular up there. And, really, the very poor excuse to eliminate the area. I found the EIS to be very frustrating. The Section 4 on page 13 that discusses impacts on other resources was amazing. All of the impacts were negative. The only impacts that were not negative were phrased in a contra-negative manner. No significant adverse impacts will result to wild horses, air the EIS to be very frustrating. The Section 4 on page 13 that discusses impacts on other resources was amazing. All of the impacts were negative. The only impacts that were not negative were phrased in a contra-negative manner. No significant adverse impacts will result to wild horses, air quality or soil quality.

Recreation will experience several negative impacts. Ranching may experience some adverse impacts if the operators are required to use horses. Very poorly done. No positive impacts, no acknowledgement that wilderness will have positive impacts on all of these resources. For instance, the drop

TESTIMONY 12

in rusting that may be caused by the lack of accessibility of four-wheel drive to areas to get the cows out, or to kill the cows or the other sort of poaching that goes on in those back country areas.

Cultural Resource Program will have negative impacts because you will not be able to build roads into a cultural resource area to develop it. Now that was really far-fetched. No acknowledgement of the lack of damage to cultural resources by the lack of easy four-wheel drive access or whatever, into a culturally rich area.

There was a whole section on proposed soil surface factor reduction, which absolutely escapes me. I have been reading EISs in Nevada for three or four years, and that is a new one on me. I could not find it defined any place. I had no idea what a proposed soil surface factor reduction is, and I realize that this is not the time to ask because you will not respond to me. But I will ask that question in my written comments on the Schell. And ask that to be explained.

There was no acknowledgement of the beneficial impacts of wilderness on soil stability, and I cannot imagine any project which would be proposed to increase soil's stability being prohibited in a wilderness area at all.

So, I found the wilderness EIS to be both positive and negative. I support most of the recommendations. I feel like you have eliminated a couple of very good areas that should be included. And I felt the EIS was a little shaky on the justifications for some of your recommendations. Thank you.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 12

Response Number 1

Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated for the Mount Grafton WSA with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS, this alternative was accepted as the proposed action.

Response Number 2

The analysis for the Fortification Range WSA has been rewritten. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The beneficial impacts of wilderness designation on other resources are discussed in Chapter 4 of the EIS.

Response Number 4

The issue of cultural resources was reassessed in the final EIS, and was not carried forward for analysis. Refer to the "Issues" section of Chapter 1.

Response Number 5

The term "soil surface factor" is described as a measure of the susceptibility of the land to erosion. A reduction in the soil surface factor is often accomplished by mechanical means such as furrowing or terracing the land.

Response Number 6

The issue of soil stability was reassessed in the final EIS, and was not carried forward for analysis. Refer to the "Issues" section of Chapter 1.

TESTIMONY 13

MS. TANNER: My name is Karen Tanner, and I am a member of the Sierra Club and a school teacher. But, I really am just speaking for myself. It is impossible to follow people like Marjorie and Roger; they are so thorough. I do not have anything new to add, but I really want to re-emphasize a few things. And I am not as poetically as Charlie or Kirk, but I will give it a try.

I really also want to commend you on your really hard work on the report. It was very concise and very easy to read and assimilate and clear and thorough, and I liked the pictures. It was great. Being a school teacher, I really like art work so that really made it very pleasant, too.

1 I support each of the eight areas recommended under the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative. For several reasons. Basically, that it is the only alternative that really seems to strike a reasonable balance between wilderness and the other multiple uses. The amount that you recommend comprises, only 7% of the total Schell Resource area. So, therefore, it leaves most of the land open to other uses. And this seems to me a fair amount for wilderness.

The two areas that are not included in your Preferred Alternative that are included in the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative, I think, are most important. The Fortification Range. I was in this last fall, and it was just beautiful. It was really spectacular, the rock formations and the area that Charlie referred to as the Gough Eye. It is really neat. I enjoyed it. And the dense forest, as far as scenic goes, it was way high and solitude, too. I was impressed by the quickness with which you could get lost in walking amongst those trees. There were four of us, and two had gone on ahead. And before they were a few yards, we could not even see them, and could only kind of navigate by voice. So that was really nice. I would love to go back. I think it is a prime wilderness area.

2 And the road, or what I think is listed as a road on that map in the Fortifications up Smiley Canyon in no way should be considered near a road. We could hardly find it in areas. It was sort of a little bit larger space between trees and other spaces, which is the only way we could tell and there were many downed limbs and brush strewn about and across this so-called road. It certainly did not seem to be maintained in any way, shape or form.

TESTIMONY 13

And the ridgeline, I agree, was nice to look at, but you would not want to camp there anyway. So, as far as having that be a factor that would throw it out, I disagree. Mt. Grafton I have not been to, just only been past and it looks beautiful and intriguing, and I really feel that given the information in your report which really gives it a very high wilderness potential listing, I think that it should remain in because your reasons for throwing it out, particularly the speculative mineral potential, I do not feel is fair, at this point, because should it stay in as a WSA, it will undergo a much more thorough, more reliable mineral assessment, than it has had so far.

Also, in the Preferred Alternative, the acreage suggested for the Worthington Mountains, 17,500 seems to be a drastic reduction from its original of 47,633. The Wilderness Deposition suggests 26,587, and that seems much more preferable, especially given the fragility of the Leviathan Cave which, unfortunately, already seems to be suffering some degradation. So, any increase in acreage there, I think, is much preferable. And that is my comments.

RESPONSE TO TESTIMONY 13

Response Number 1

Your preference for the Wilderness Emphasis Alternative in the draft EIS has been noted.

Response Number 2

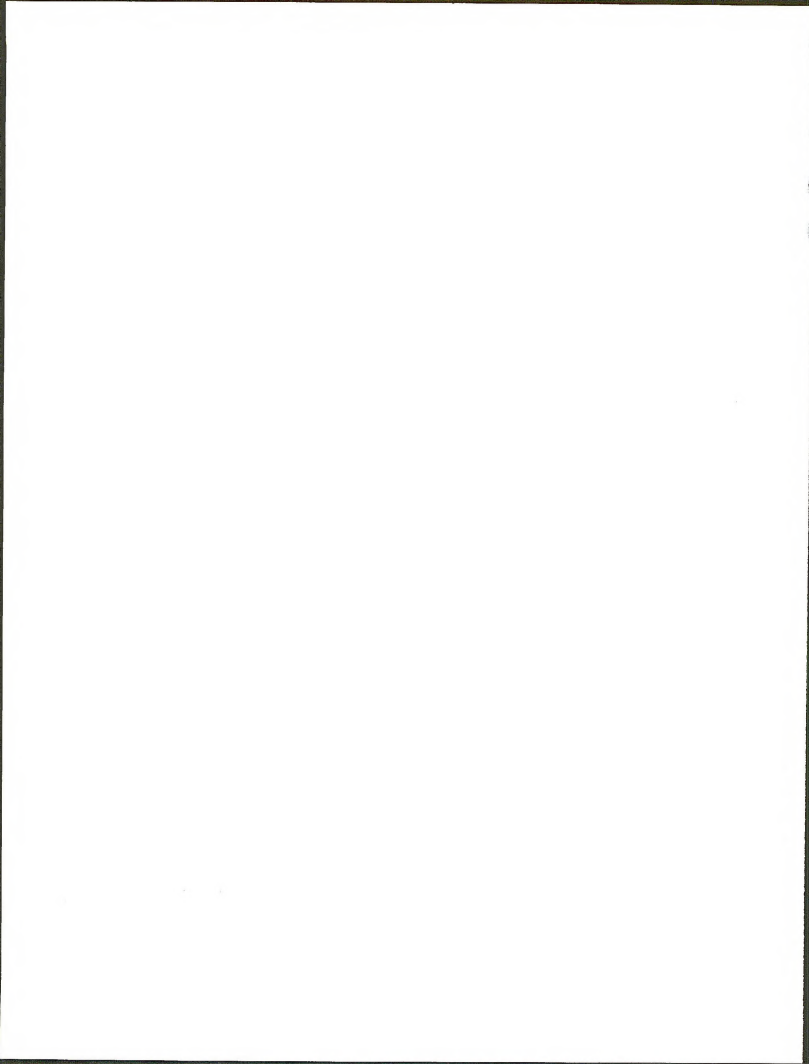
The scenic values of the Fortification Range have been documented in Chapter 3. The vehicle route up Smiley Canyon was cherry-stemmed to allow access into this portion of the WSA. The BLM is considering a scenic area designation for a small area, to recognize and protect the highly scenic values of Cottonwood Canyon in the Fortification Range. Refer to the Recreation Management Actions section for the Proposed Action in Chapter 2.

Response Number 3

The high quality wilderness values of the Mount Grafton WSA are well documented. Due to public comment on the draft EIS, a new partial wilderness alternative was evaluated with 30,115 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness. In the final EIS this alternative was accepted as the proposed action.

Response Number 4

There is some merit to your suggestion that including additional acreage would enhance the wilderness values present in the Worthington Mountains WSA. In recognition of this, the east boundary has been revised in the Proposed Action in the Final EIS to include an additional 9,000 acres.



**GOVERNOR'S
CONSISTENCY LETTER**



THE STATE OF NEVADA
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER

Carson City, Nevada 89710

RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

TELEPHONE
(702) 885-5670

January 10, 1984

Edward F. Spang, Director
Nevada State Office
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006

Dear Mr. Spang:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of the Bureau's Preliminary Final Environmental Impact Statement (PFEIS) for Schell Wilderness Recommendations, and submit to you the State's recommendations for wilderness within the Schell Resource Area. During the development and review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, various state agencies responded to the wilderness proposals presented. The responses reflected the individual concerns of these agencies regarding their specific areas of concern and responsibility. A single State position was not developed for the Schell area.

I have asked those agencies to review their previous responses and collectively develop a position that would adequately represent the State's overall interest. The preliminary recommendations developed by the Bureau, evaluation of wilderness values, resource conflicts, agency needs, local government interests, and the concerns expressed by the general public were utilized in developing this consensus. I concur with the position developed by these agencies and ask you to consider this response as the position of the State of Nevada regarding wilderness proposals in the Schell Resource Area. Our response to the preliminary final recommendations is:

1. Mt. Grafton Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-169): In your Draft EIS you recommended that this wilderness study area be dropped from further wilderness consideration. Now, in the Preliminary Final EIS, you are recommending that 30,115 acres be designated as wilderness. All

State agencies concur with your original recommendation, and urge you to drop this wilderness study area from further consideration. We note that this wilderness study area includes old tungsten mining sites that have potential for additional production. It also has many roads and ways. The Department of Wildlife feels that the access provided by these roads and ways is essential to their wildlife management programs. We recognize the scenic values of the area, and would support the development of a special management plan to protect these values, but feel that the Mt. Grafton area should not be given further consideration for wilderness designation.

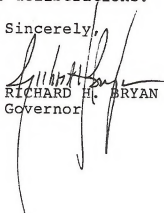
2. Far South Egan Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-172): The State supports the continued consideration of the Far South Egan area for wilderness consideration, as recommended in your report.
3. Fortification Range Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-177): We concur with your recommendation that this area be dropped from further wilderness consideration. Its scenic and wilderness values are outweighed by resource conflicts and the area is impacted by many roads and ways.
4. Table Mountain Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-197): We concur with the Bureau's recommendation that this area not be given further wilderness consideration. This area has many resource conflicts. Among others, it is a valuable deer hunting area, and the Department of Wildlife feels that these values would be harmed by wilderness designation. We recommend that it be dropped from wilderness study.
5. White Rock Range Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-202): The State can not agree with your preliminary final recommendation that 23,625 acres in this wilderness study area be considered for wilderness designation. This area lacks significant wilderness values. It has been a key deer area, but deer habitat has been damaged by pinyon-juniper encroachment. The vegetative rehabilitation needed would not be possible under wilderness management. We recommend that the area be dropped from further consideration.
6. Parsnip Peak Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-206): This area has many resource conflicts. While we note its wilderness values, we find them to be outweighed by these conflicts. This is a key deer hunting area and

the Department of Wildlife is opposed to its designation for that reason. It also has significant mineral values, including perlite workings in the southern area and jasperite deposits in the center. We also note the extensive areas proposed for vegetative treatment. On the balance, conflicts are severe enough to cause the State to ask that this area not be considered further for wilderness status.

7. Worthington Mountains Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-242): The preferred alternative in your preliminary final EIS has increased the acreage to a total of over 26,000 acres recommended for wilderness. We concur that the wilderness values of this area are strong and outweigh resource conflicts. We support the preferred alternative and the further consideration of this area as wilderness.
8. Weepah Springs Wilderness Study Area (NV-040-246): Your preferred alternative supports the designation of 50,449 acres of this area as wilderness. We concur that this area has strong wilderness values. However, we note mineral conflicts in the northwestern part of the area. We support the continued consideration of this area as wilderness with an adjustment of boundary to exclude the northwestern area of mineral potential shown on your maps.

The State appreciates the opportunity to comment. We urge you to carefully consider our concerns and those of local units of government in your deliberations.

Sincerely,



RICHARD H. BRYAN
Governor

RHB/sc

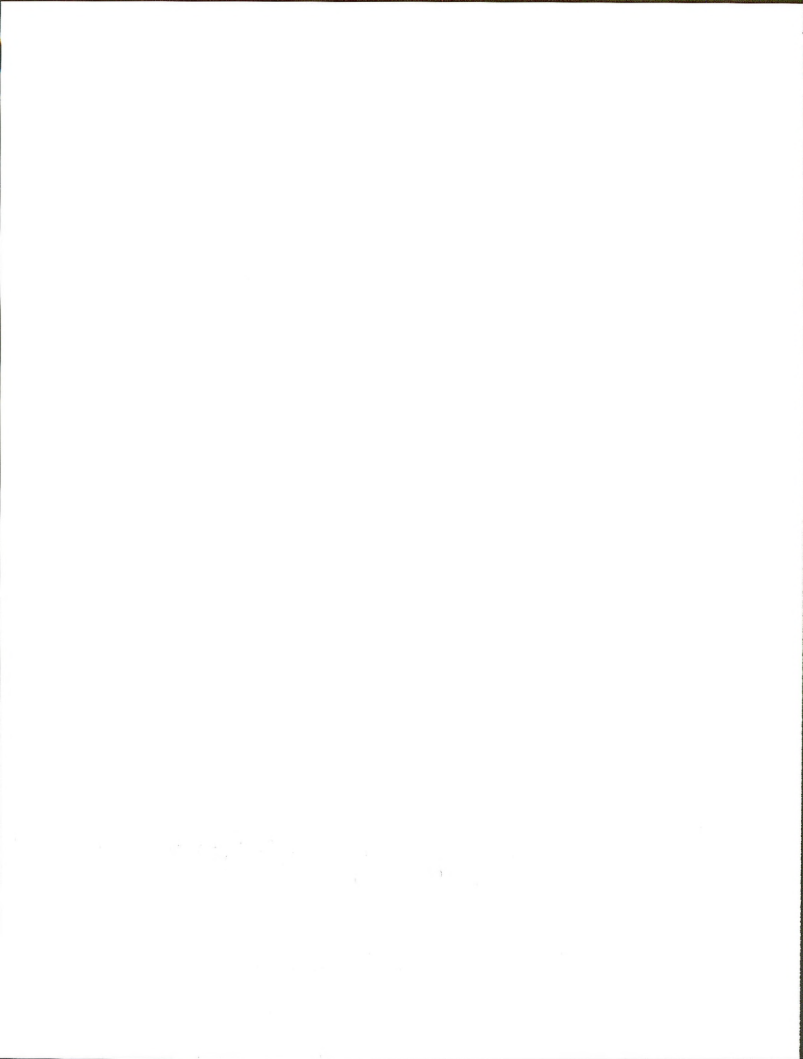
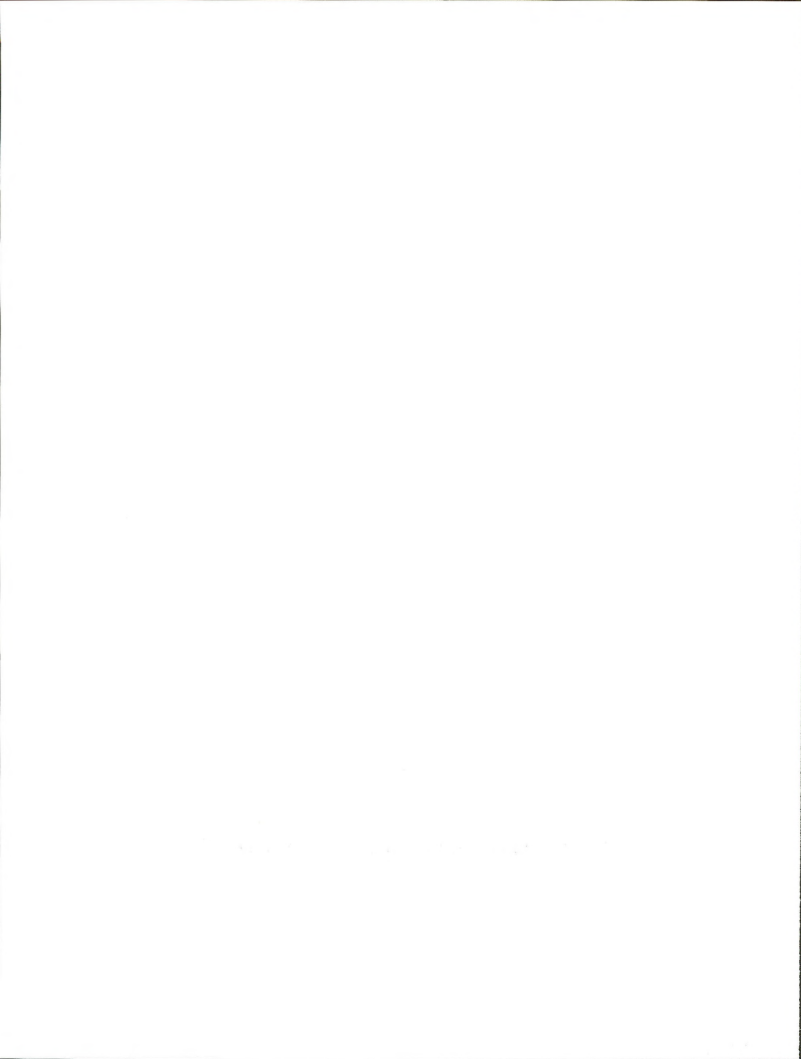


TABLE 13
LIST OF PREPARERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Years of Experience</u>
Brian Amme	Assistant Team Leader/Cultural Resources	B.A. Anthropology Univ. of California Santa Barbara	11
Mark Barber	T & E Animals/ Watershed	B.S. Wildlife Mgt. Oregon State University	16
Robert Brown	Wild Horses	B.S. Zoology Univ. of Arizona	11
Diane Colcord	Cartography	B.S. Art Education Univ. of Oregon	18
David Cottle	Range	B.S. Range Colorado State Univ.	4
Kathy Lindsey	T & E Plants	B.S. Wildlife Mgt. Univ. of Nevada - Reno	8
Shaaron Netherton	Team Leader/ Recreation/ Wilderness	B.S. Wildlife Mgt. Humboldt State Univ.	9
Jerry O'Donnell	Word Processor	A.A. College of Southern Utah	4
Paula Peterson	Hardrock Minerals	B.S. Geology Univ. of Michigan M.S. Geology Michigan Tech. Univ.	7
Louise Power	Editor/Proofreader	B.S. Park Administration Texas Tech. Univ.	20
Jacob Rajala	Environmental Review	B.A., M.A. Anthropology M.S. Forestry & Range Mgt. Washington State Univ.	10
David Redmond	Lands	B.A. Geography Univ. of Montana	11
Harry T. Rhea	Forestry	B.S. Forestry Univ. of Tennessee	13

Loran Robison	Range	B.S. Forestry and Range Management Utah State Univ.	13
William D. Robison	Energy Resources	A.A. Engineering South Western College B.S. Geology San Diego State University	6
A. Wayne Stevens	Range	B.S. Range Management Washington State University	9
Rita Suminski	Wildlife	B.S. Wildlife/M.S. Wildlife Kansas State University New Mexico State University	7
Steve Surian	Range	B.S. Range Management Humboldt State University	6

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REFERENCES

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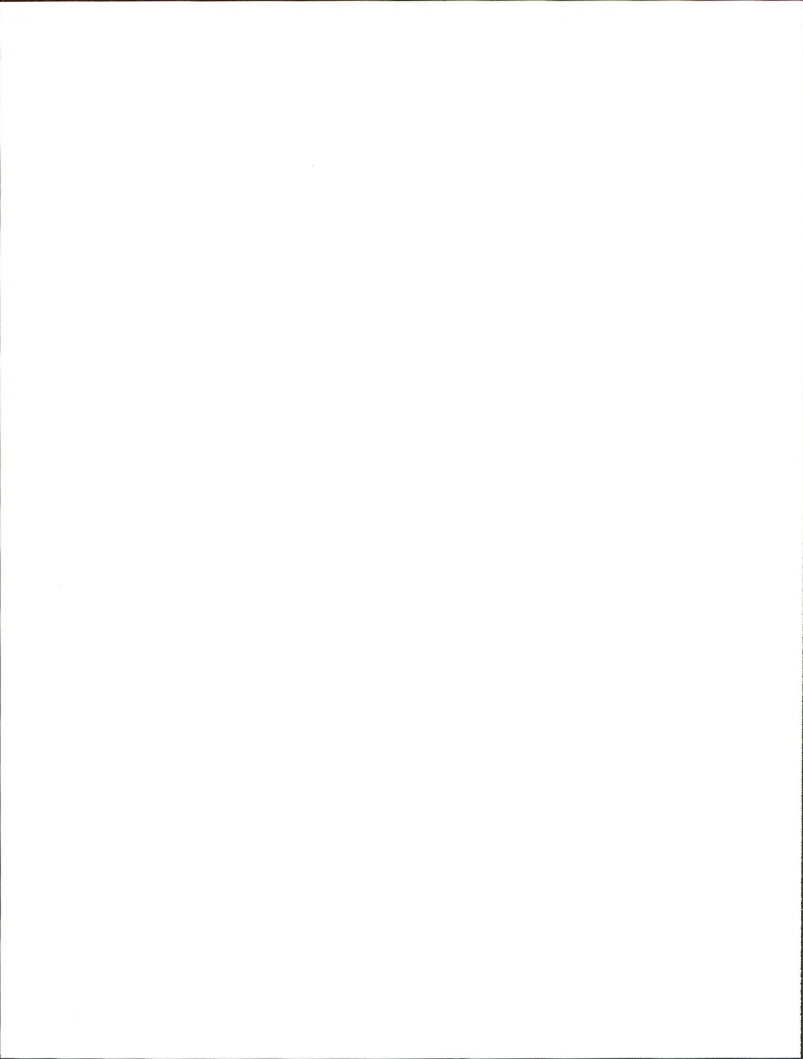
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GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY

ALLOTMENT: An area allocated for the use of the livestock of one or more qualified grazing permittees including prescribed numbers and kinds of livestock under one plan of management.

Allotment Management Plan (AMP): A documented program which applies to livestock grazing on the public lands, prepared in consultation, cooperation, and coordination with the permittee(s), lessee(s), or other involved affected interests. (See 43 CFR 4100.0-5.)

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM): The amount of forage necessary for the sustenance of one cow or its equivalent for a period of one month.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC): Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage in important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

BENCH: A series of confluent alluvial fans along the base of a mountain range.

CHAINING: A method of vegetation manipulation consisting of dragging an anchor chain through vegetation to break off or uproot shrubs or trees.

CHERRYSTEM: A boundary configuration in which the boundary of a wilderness study area or proposed wilderness is drawn around a dead-end road or other linear feature so as to exclude that road or feature from the wilderness study area or proposed wilderness.

CHERRYSTEM ROAD: A dead-end road excluded from wilderness study by means of a cherrystem.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Those fragile and nonrenewable remains of human activity, occupation, or endeavor, reflected in districts, sites, structures, buildings, objects, artifacts, ruins, works of art, architecture and natural features, that were of importance in human events. These resources consist of (1) physical remains, (2) areas where significant human events occurred-- even though evidence of the event may no longer remain and (3) the environment immediately surrounding the resource.

DISCOVERY: A term used in connection with mining claims. As stated in a legal ruling which has been upheld in many later decisions, it is "where minerals have been found and the evidence is of such a character that a person of ordinary prudence would be justified in the further expenditure of his labor and means, with a reasonable prospect of success, in developing a valuable mine..."

DRIFT FENCE: A fence designed to keep livestock from getting off or on to a range or confine herds to specific elevations.

ECOSYSTEM: A complex self-sustaining natural system which includes living and non-living components of the environment and the interactions that bind them together. Its functioning involves the circulation of matter and energy between organisms and their environment.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: Any species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range, as identified in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

FLPMA: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743, 43 USC 1701).

FORAGE: All browse and herbaceous foods that are available to grazing animals. It may be grazed or harvested for feeding.

GUZZLER: A water catchment which traps and stores precipitation in a water storage area. The water is fed into a trough and made available to wildlife or livestock.

HABITAT: All elements of an organism's environment needed to complete its life cycle through reproduction including, but not limited to food, cover, water and living space in the amounts, qualities and locations which the organism requires to complete its life cycle.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN: An officially approved plan for a specific geographic area which identifies wildlife habitat and related objectives, establishes the sequence of actions for achieving objectives and outlines procedures for evaluating accomplishments.

INHOLDING: State or privately owned property surrounded by the WSA.

KEY RANGE: Range on which a species depends for survival; there are no alternative ranges available.

LEASABLE MINERALS: Those minerals subject to lease by the Federal Government. Includes oil and gas, coal, geothermal, phosphate, sodium, potash and oil shale.

LITHIC: Pertaining to stone.

LOCATABLE MINERALS: Minerals subject to disposal and development through the Mining Law of 1872 (as amended). Generally includes metallic minerals such as gold and silver and other materials not subject to lease or sale.

LONG-TERM: Five years or more from the implementation of the Congressionally selected alternative.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP): Land use plan for public lands that provides a set of goals, objectives, and constraints for a specific planning unit to guide the development of detailed plans for the management of each resource. The planning process is divided into three steps. Specialists prepare management recommendations for their respective resources in step one. The manager, through a conflict resolution process, develops a proposed plan from the recommendations in step two. The final decision to adopt a plan is made in step three.

MANAGEABLE WOODLAND: Any woodland area of 10 percent or greater crown cover located on a slope of 30 percent or less which has existing or potential feasible access.

METALLIC MINERALS: Minerals with a high specific gravity and metallic luster, such as titanium, tin, lead, iron, etc.

MINERAL ENTRY: Is claim location on Federal lands open to mining for the purpose of exploration or exploitation of minerals located there.

MINERAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL:

High Potential - High potential is assigned to areas when the geologic environment, the inferred geologic processes, the reported mineral occurrences, and the known mines or deposits indicate high favorability for accumulation of mineral resources.

Moderate Potential - Moderate potential is assigned to areas when the geologic environment, the inferred geologic processes, and the reported mineral occurrences indicate moderate favorability for accumulation of mineral resources.

Low Potential - Low potential is assigned to areas when the geologic environment and the inferred geologic processes indicate low favorability for accumulation of mineral resources.

No Potential - No potential is assigned to areas when the geologic environment and the inferred geologic processes do not indicate favorability for accumulation of mineral resources.

MINING DISTRICT: A section of country usually designated by name and described or understood as being confined within certain natural boundaries, in which gold or silver or other minerals may be found in paying quantities.

MULTIPLE-USE: Balanced management of the various surface and subsurface resources, without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land that will best meet present and future needs.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: The official list implemented by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, of the Nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation.

NATURALNESS: Refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's works substantially unnoticeable." (From Section 2(c), Wilderness Act).

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV): Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain.

OPEN DESIGNATION: Areas on public lands where motor vehicles may be operated, subject only to standard operating regulations.

OUTSTANDING: 1. standing out among others of its kind; conspicuous; prominent. 2. superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent.

PATENTED MINING CLAIM: A claim in which title has passed from the Federal Government to the mining claimant under the mining laws.

PERMITTEE: One who holds a permit to graze livestock on public land.

PETROGLYPH: A form of rock art manufactured by incising, scratching, or pecking designs into rock surfaces.

PINYON AND JUNIPER ENCROACHMENT: The invasion of pinyon pine and juniper trees into a dominant brushland area where pinyon pine and juniper have not previously occurred or in an area where the dominant brushland is essential to the sustenance of wildlife species.

POST-FLPMA: The period of time after the enactment of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (October 21, 1976).

PRECIOUS MINERALS: Minerals identified as having an intrinsic value. These are the relatively scarce metals such as gold, silver, and the platinum-group metals.

PRE-FLPMA: On or before October 21, 1976.

PRESCRIBED BURNING: Controlled application of fire to wildland fuels in either their natural or modified state, under such conditions of weather, fuel, moisture, etc., as to allow the fire to be confined to a predetermined area while producing the intensity of heat and rate of spread required to achieve certain planned objectives of silviculture, wildlife management, grazing, fire hazard reduction and insect and disease control.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION: Nonmotorized and nondeveloped types of outdoor recreational activities.

PUBLIC LANDS: Lands administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management.

RANGE CONDITION: The present state of vegetation of a range site in relation to the climax plant community for that site. It is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions, and amounts of plants in the present plant community resemble that of the climax plant community for the site. Range condition is basically an ecological rating of the plant community. Four range condition classes are used to express the degree to which the composition of the present plant community reflects that of the climax: Excellent (76-100%), Good (51-75%), fair (26-50%), Poor (0-25%).

RANGE DEVELOPMENT: Any activity on or relating to rangelands designed to improve production of forage, change vegetation composition, control pattern of use, provide water, stabilize soil and water conditions and enhance habitat for livestock, fish, wildlife and wild horses and burros.

RANGELAND DRILL: A piece of machinery used to dig furrows and apply seed at the same time.

RAPTOR: A bird of prey.

RECREATION VISITOR DAY: A 12-hour period spent in recreation activities by one or more individuals in a public land area. The time may be spent, for example, by one individual for 12 hours or 3 individuals for 4 hours each. This unit helps to calculate recreation use.

RIPARIAN: Situated on or pertaining to the bank of a river, stream, or other body of water. Normally used to refer to plants of all types that grow along streams or around springs.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP): The basic decision document of BLM's resource management planning process, used to establish allocation and coordination among uses for the various resources within a Resource Area. An RMP is a "land-use plan" prescribed by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. The RMP regulations appear at 43 CFR 1601.

ROAD: A vehicle route which has been improved and maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use.

ROADLESS: For the purpose of the wilderness review program, this refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.

SCOPING SESSION: An early and open process for determining the significant issues related to a proposed action which are to be addressed in the environment impact statement.

SHORT-TERM: The five-year period following the implementation of the Congressionally selected alternative.

SOLITUDE: 1. The state of being alone or remote from habitations; isolation. 2. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place.

SUITABLE FOR PRESERVATION AS WILDERNESS: Refers to a recommendation that certain Federal lands satisfy the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act and have been found appropriate for designation as wilderness on the basis of an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES: Values that may be present in an area under consideration for wilderness, such as ecological, geological, or other features or scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. They are not required for wilderness designation, but their presence will enhance an area's wilderness quality.

THREATENED SPECIES: Any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

UNIT RESOURCE ANALYSIS (URA): A BLM planning document which contains a comprehensive display of physical resource data and an analysis of the current use, production, condition, and trend of the resources and the potentials and opportunities within a planning unit, including a profile of ecological values.

VALID MINING CLAIM: A mining claim on which a discovery has been made. (See "discovery.")

VEGETATION MANIPULATION: Alternative of vegetation by fire, mechanical, chemical, or biological means to meet management objective.

WATERSHED: A total area of land above a given point on a waterway that contributes runoff water to the flow at that point.

WAY: A vehicle route which has not been improved and maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use.

WICKIUP: An American Indian hut made of brushwood or covered with mats.

WILDCAT WELL: A hole drilled to explore for oil and gas on a geologic structure or in an environment that has never produced.

WILDERNESS: An uncultivated, uninhabited, and usually roadless area set aside for preservation of natural conditions. According to Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

WILDERNESS AREA: An area formally designated by Act of Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS: Key characteristics of a wilderness listed in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and used by BLM in its wilderness inventory. These characteristics include size, naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude, outstanding opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation and supplemental values.

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT: The management of lands which have been designated by Act of Congress as wilderness areas.

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS: A recommendation by the Bureau of Land Management, the Secretary of the Interior, or the President, with respect to an area's suitability or unsuitability for preservation as wilderness.

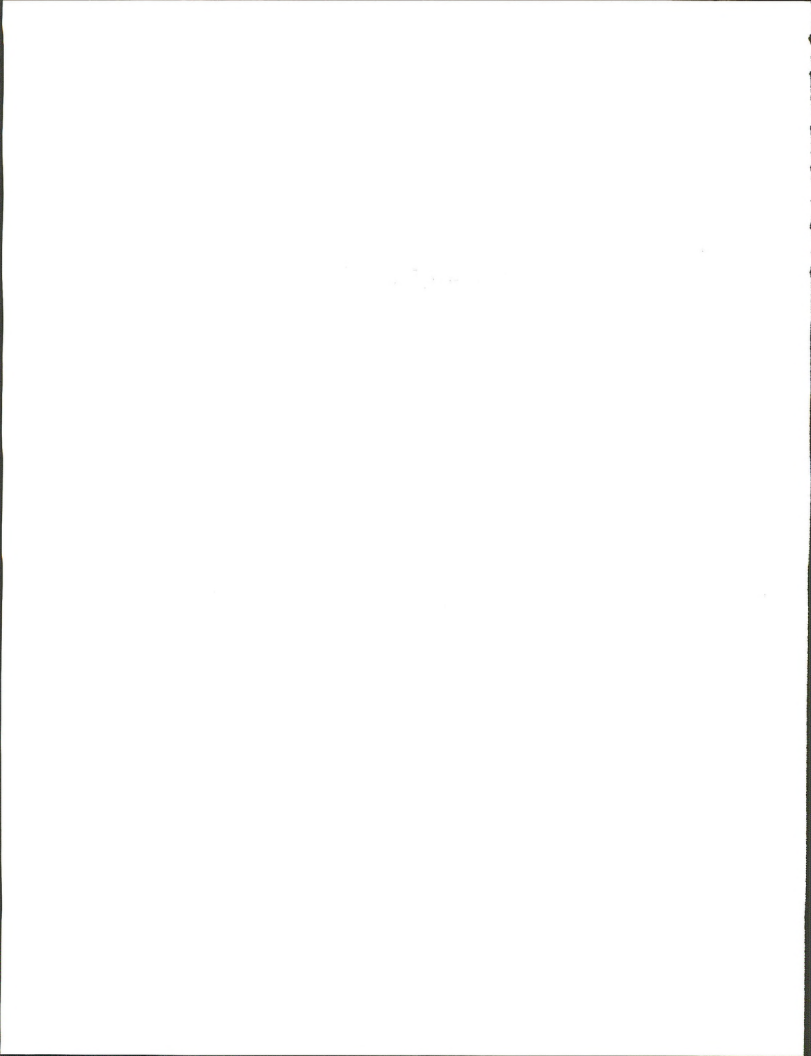
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA): A roadless area or island that has been inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

WILDERNESS STUDY CRITERIA: The criteria and quality standards developed in the Wilderness Study Policy to guide planning efforts in the wilderness EIS's. Refer to Appendix A for a list of the criteria.

WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT: Any procedure or activity designed to maintain or improve aquatic or terrestrial habitat, including, but not limited to seeding and other methods of vegetative management, water development, fence construction and/or modification and installation of in-stream structures.

WITHDRAWAL: Removal, or withholding, of public lands by statute, or Secretarial order, from operation of some or all of the public land laws ("surface", mining and/or mineral leasing laws).

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF STUDY POLICY CRITERIA AND QUALITY STANDARDS

CRITERION 1 EVALUATION OF WILDERNESS VALUES: The BLM will consider the extent that each of the following factors contributes to the overall wilderness value of the area.

-Mandatory Wilderness Characteristics: The quality of the WSAs wilderness characteristics (size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation).

-Special Features: The quality of the optional wilderness characteristics (ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value).

-Multiple Resource Benefits: The benefits to other resource values which only wilderness designation of the area could ensure.

-Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS): How wilderness designation of the area would contribute to expanding the diversity of the NWPS. To be addressed are: ecosystems and land forms, areas within a day's driving time, and balancing the geographic distribution of wilderness areas.

CRITERION 2 MANAGEABILITY: The area must be capable of being effectively managed to preserve its wilderness character.

QUALITY STANDARDS: These six standards will be applied to each WSA and the information gathered will be analyzed and documented in the wilderness environmental impact statement and wilderness study reports.

ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES: Each WSA's identified or potential energy and mineral resource values will be assessed before making a suitability recommendation. All areas recommended as suitable for wilderness preservation will have a U.S. Geological Survey/Bureau of Mines mineral survey completed before Congress reviews the final recommendations.

IMPACTS ON OTHER RESOURCES: The resource values or uses of the WSA which would be foregone or adversely affected by wilderness designation will be considered.

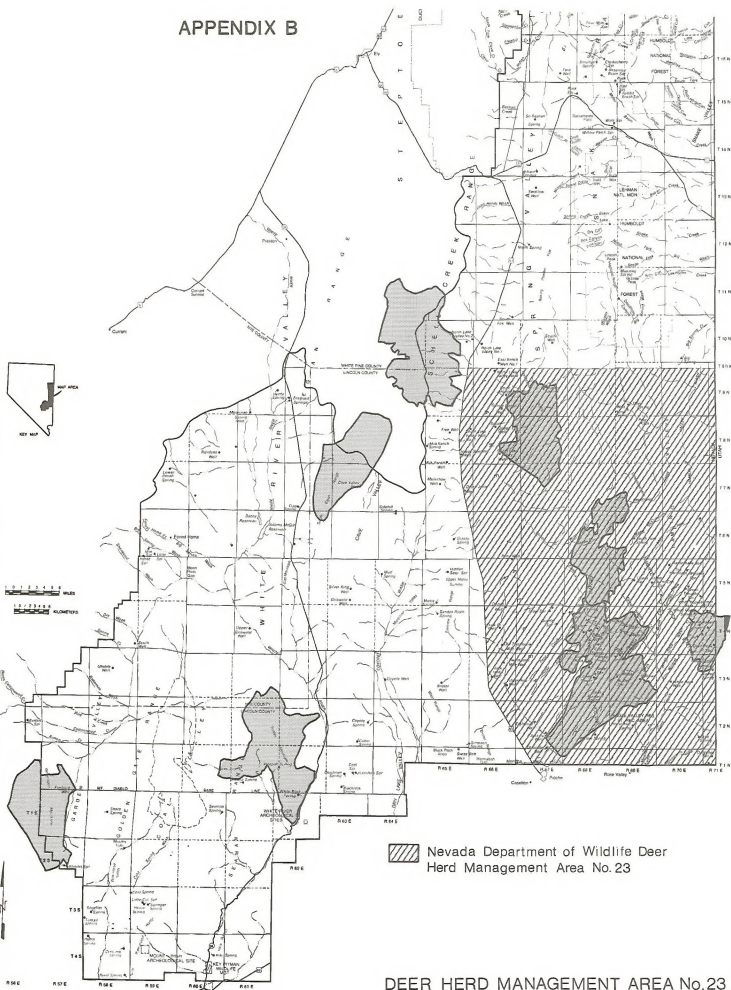
IMPACTS OF NONDESIGNATION ON WILDERNESS VALUES: If an area were not designated as wilderness, those values which would be foregone or adversely affected will be considered.

PUBLIC COMMENT: The BLM will consider all comments received from the public at all levels -- local, state, regional and national.

LOCAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS: The BLM will give special attention to local adverse or favorable economic and social effects, identified through the wilderness study process, in determining the suitability recommendations.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS: The BLM will consider the extent to which its suitability recommendations are consistent with approved and adopted resource-related plans of state and local governments and Indian tribes.

APPENDIX B



DEER HERD MANAGEMENT AREA No.23

APPENDIX C

GRAZING ALLOTMENTS AND USE IN WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

WSA	Allotments	Animal	% of Allotment in WSA	No. AUM's Active Preference	Approximate AUM's/WSA
Mount Grafton	Cattle Camp/Cave Valley	Cattle	31%	6,878	941
	Cave Valley Ranch	Cattle	53%	2,700	716
	Geyser	Cattle	12%	12,308	564
Far South Egnas	Shingle Pass	Cattle	25%	2,802	376
	Sunnyside	Cattle	17%	8,787	613
Fortification Range	Geyser	Cattle	9%	12,308	705
	South Spring Valley	Cattle & Sheep	0.1%	6,329	25
	Cottonwood	Cattle	25%	4,106	266
	Wilson Creek	Cattle & Sheep	0.8%	54,276	219
449 Table Mountain	Wilson Creek	Cattle	3%	54,276	1,797
White Rock Range	Wilson Creek	Cattle	2%	54,276	1,181
Parsnip Peak	Wilson Creek	Cattle	8%	54,276	4,408
Worthington Mountains	Worthington Mountain	Cattle & Sheep	35%	6,298	506
	McCutcheon	Cattle	24%	446	87
	Sand Spring	Cattle	7%	7,120	492
Weepah Spring	Needles	Sheep	2%	3,617	21
	Timber Mountain	Sheep & Cattle	62%	965	211
	Wilson Creek	Cattle & Sheep	1%	54,276	272
	North Hiko Six Mile	Cattle	4%	543	10
	Oreana Spring	Cattle & Sheep	40%	3,433	776
	West Timber Mountain	Sheep	51%	735	145

APPENDIX D

T&E AND SENSITIVE SPECIES LIST

<u>Species Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Management Areas</u>
Bald Eagle (<u>Haliaeetus</u> <u>leucocephalus</u>)	Endangered	Scattered - winter near open water/wetland. Found in Table Mountain, White Rock Range, and Parsnip Peak WSA's.
Ferruginous Hawk (<u>Buteo</u> <u>regalis</u>)	Category 2*	Nests in juniper stringers near white sage flats, most commonly on the east side of valleys. Found in Weepah Spring, Fortification Range, Far South Egans, White Rock Range, and Parsnip Peak WSA's.
MacBride Phacelia (<u>Phacelia</u> <u>anelsonii</u>)	Category 3C**	Shaded soil at the base of cliffs, among rocks, or in sandy and gravelly washes. Found in Weepah Spring WSA.
Peregrine Falcon (<u>Falco</u> <u>peregrinus</u>)	Endangered	Scattered - most common in areas with high concentrations of small birds. Found in Weepah Spring, Far South Egans, and Worthington Mountains WSA's.
Red Canyon Phlox (<u>Phlox</u> <u>gladiformis</u>)	Category 3C**	Gravelly, heavy clay soil on rocky slopes. Found in Weepah Spring WSA.
Rose Beehive Cactus (<u>Coryphantha</u> <u>vivipara</u> var. <u>rosea</u>)	Category 3C**	Gravelly limestone or volcanic slopes and brushy hillsides. Found near Mt. Grafton WSA.

* Category 2 - Comprises taxa for which information now indicates that proposing to list the species as Endangered or Threatened is possibly appropriate, but for which substantial data are not currently available to biologically support a proposed rule. Further biological research and field study will usually be necessary to ascertain the status of the taxa in this category.

** Category 3C - Comprises taxa proven to be more abundant or widespread than originally believed and/or not subject to any identifiable threat.





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